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Everybody's

FRANK QUINN
EDITOR

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To men who breakfast on nails!

THIS gentleman's before-breakfast temper, resulting from baths with sinker-soap, *used* to give his wife the impression that his favorite breakfast menu would be a rasher of crisp nails and a couple of hard-boiled padlocks on toast.

The temper would develop by stages. No sooner would our optimist exert his first strenuous effort at lather-culture than the shy here-and-there soap would flee his grasp and scuttle to the vast uncharted tub-bottom, defying recapture.

Now notice the change. How beneficent the smile! How charmingly effective the neat little wing arrangement, registering virtue and loving-kindness. Nails and padlocks are no longer on our gentleman's menu — the grace of his company at breakfast is now matched only by the engaging softness of his three-minute eggs.

This magic was achieved by wifely intelligence cooperating with a cake of the rich-lathering, quick-rinsing white soap that floats. Men who have changed to this soap for their morning baths tell us that they never knew before what a jubilant luxury bathing could be. *You can always find Ivory when you want it—at the grocery or in the tub.*

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OUR *Department of Feminine Economics recommends especially to wives: A cake of dainty new* *__round-edged__ Guest Ivory for the saving price of 5 cents. Why not be extravagant, and buy 3 cakes at once?*

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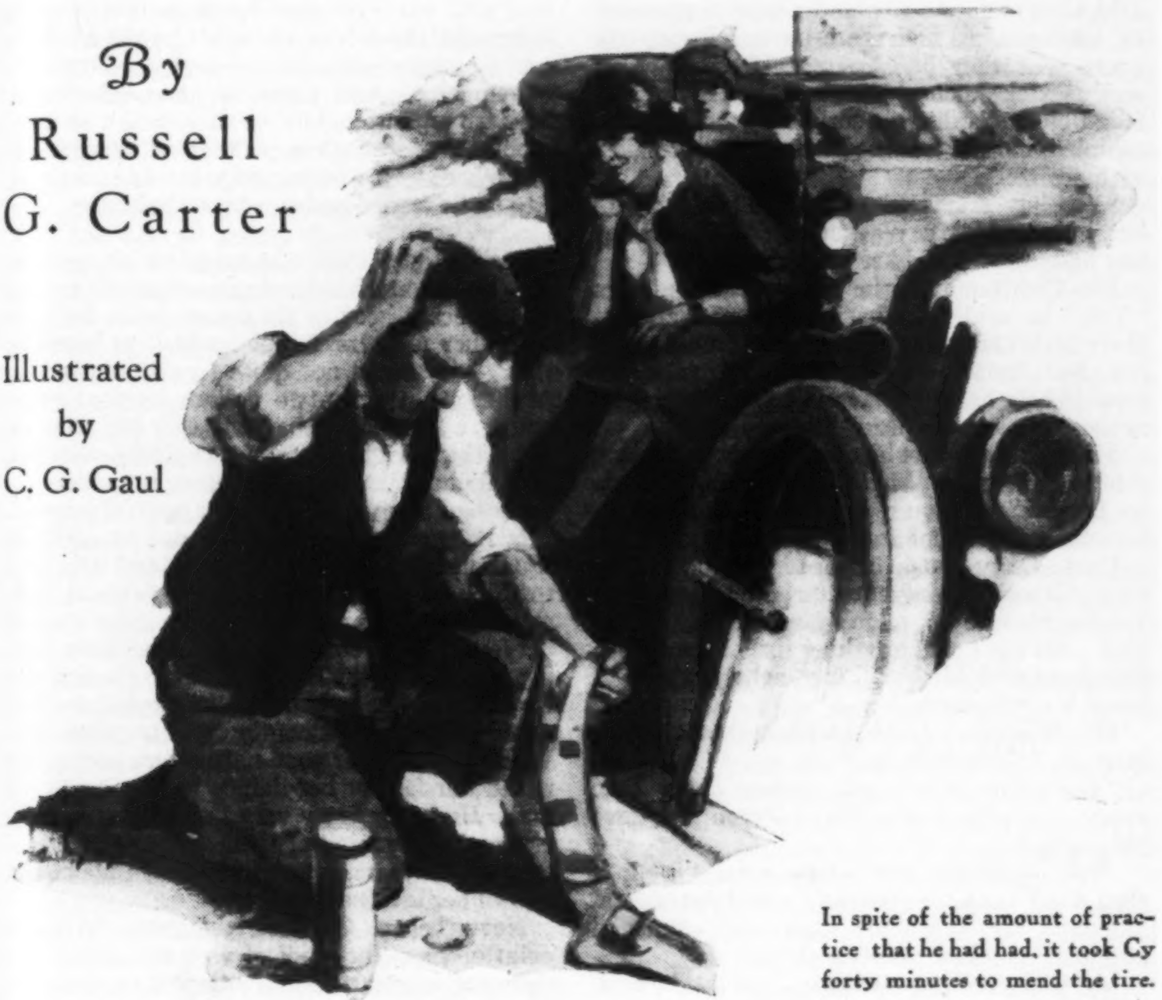
Advertising section continued in rear of book

A Native *of the* Neck

By
Russell
G. Carter

Illustrated
by
C. G. Gaul



In spite of the amount of practice that he had had, it took Cy forty minutes to mend the tire.

Down on the Cape the fine art of economy is never forgotten, even in courtship

NOTHING goes to waste on the Neck. An Armenian rug peddler who spent three days one spring, covering the territory in a vain attempt to make a sale, returned to Boston, amazed at what he had seen. "They don't buy *anything* down there," he confided to his neighbor. "When they need a thing they make it out of something else!"

In a general way his observation was true. The natives of the Neck are a frugal folk; the quality of "making a thing do" is in their blood; and as "Uncle Davy" Cleb once remarked at a meeting held at the Brokeville general store and postoffice—held, by the way, for no less a purpose than that of electing a President of the United States—"The Pres'dent's served purty well fer four years, an' me and my boy Cyrus expect to cast our ballots fer him. 'Tain't sound sense or good economy to let go a thing ye've had fer only four years. We ought to keep him fer four more, at least, eh, Henry?"

Uncle Davy was seated now beside "Dad" Washburn on the bench beneath the Cleb apple tree. Both old men were puffing contentedly at their pipes, now and then letting fall a random observation, philosophical or practical, as they looked off across the sloping field toward the harbor. Except for one thing the view would have been a peaceful one that fresh September morning.

Halfway between the Cleb house and the water stood a small nondescript automobile with the rear wheels in the air, like the heels of a kicking mule; and behind them, surrounded by various tools and spare parts lying on the grass as if they had been scattered by that vicious kick, knelt a tall, lank hatless man in faded blue overalls; his curly chestnut hair was rumpled, his sun-browned hands were streaked with grease.

"Yer boy seems to be havin' trouble with her," observed Mr. Washburn. "Just like my boy had 'fore he sold her to Cyrus."

Mr. Cleb removed the pipe from his mouth. "Yes," he said, "Cyrus is allus mad at that there little car; he's had a heap o' trouble with her, but 'tain't naught compared with the trouble he's likely to have if he keeps on goin' in the d'rection he's headed."

Mr. Washburn cast his old friend a questioning sidelong glance. "What's the trouble ye allude to, David?" he inquired. "He ain't aimin' to become a p'fessional automobile racer, I hope."

Uncle Davy shook his head. "No," he replied, "it's somethin' more dangerous than that. I s'pect that boy o' mine's plannin' to git married. He ain't said anything fur's I know, but I've lived with him fer thirty-eight years, an' I know his symptoms."

Mr. Washburn nodded with a show of deep interest. "Who's the gal?"

"That Prov'dence gal, comes down here every year after Labor Day—Eaton, I b'lieve the name is."

"So!" exclaimed his companion. "Well, if that don't beat the dickens!" And for several moments Mr. Washburn alternately chuckled and made clucking noises with his lips.

Mr. Cleb eyed him curiously. At last he said, "What about it that tickles ye, Henry?"

"What tickles me? Nothin' much, 'cept Wilbur's made up his mind to marry that gal, himself."

"Your boy!" inquired Mr. Cleb in astonishment. "You don't mean your Wilbur?"

"That's it," replied the other.

For several seconds the two old men sat in meditative silence; then they both began to chuckle. "Don't it beat the dickens?" observed Mr. Cleb, and the other responded, "It does, David, it does!"

At that moment Cyrus Cleb rose and kicked savagely at the jack supporting the rear wheels of the troublesome car, and the two men saw the angry blue of his eyes and heard the vibrant note in his voice as he exclaimed, "You dirty, cranky, good-fer-nothin' piece o' junk! I've a damn good notion to put a hunk o' dynamite under you!"

"That don't sound like a man about to git married," observed Mr. Washburn.

"No," agreed the other, "sounds more like a man already married."

Cyrus stood there glaring at the little car. It was like him that he frequently had a "damn' good notion" of doing something rash, and it was also like him that he never did it. For Cyrus Cleb had lived all his life on the Neck; he was by nature cautious and saving. Dynamite is dangerous and expensive and, discharged beneath an automobile—even beneath an automobile that so obviously deserved dynamiting, as Cy's did—is apt to prove a wasteful agent. At last he turned and strode to the house.

CY'S burst of anger did not affect his appetite, but he ate his dinner in unwonted silence, paying scant heed to the conversation between his father and Mrs. Babbitt, who kept house for them. Cy could not quite forgive himself for paying out twenty-two dollars for that car—one of the few unwise bargains that he had made in his thirty-eight years; nor could he quite forgive Wilbur Washburn for selling it to him.

Cy had bought the car for a special purpose. Ella Eaton of Providence was due to arrive as usual the second week in October, and Ella liked to ride—which was only natural perhaps, considering her plump figure and the dainty size of her feet. For a dozen years Ella had been coming regularly to the Neck, and from the first day Cy had seen her he had been interested and had noted something eminently desirable about her. Whether it was her good-natured manner or her round fair face or her dainty feet he could not say. He really knew very little about her; for although the period of their acquaintance covered twelve years, in point of actual time he had known her less than a year.

Nevertheless, Cy took the more favorable point of view, the point of view of a lover. In planning to speak to her with serious intent he was sure he was acting with his customary native caution. He had known her for twelve years; he was satisfied with her father's politics and with various other little scraps of information that he had heard concerning her. He would ask her to be his wife, and then if she consented—and if the election went the right way, thus insuring continued prosperity—perhaps they could be married the following spring. Cy would have liked to postpone his proposal until after the election, but that seemed out of the question; Ella would be gone by then.

"Cyrus," said his father.

Cy blinked and looked up from his plate. "What is it?" he asked.

"Heard somethin' int'restin' today," replied Uncle Davy. "Wilbur Washburn, they say, has set his mind on gettin' married."

"Huh," remarked Cy. "Let him. Can't say I'm dyin' to dance at the weddin'."

"No, Cy; shouldn't think ye would be." Mr. Cleb's eyes twinkled, and he scrutinized the face of his son, who again seemed lost in abstraction. Cy was thinking, not of Ella now, but of his bad bargain. His father's next words caused him to look up with genuine surprise.

"They say Wilbur's set on marryin' that Eaton gal from Prov'dence."

Cy stiffened. He moistened his lips; then, "Huh!" he grunted, and after a pause, "Let him." Inwardly he added, "if he can!"

IN THE afternoon when Cy resumed work on the car his thoughts were not the thoughts of a happy lover. Again and again his words justified the current gossip that "Cy Cleb's car is just ruining his chances o' heaven." He wished heartily he had never been such a fool as to take it off Wilbur's hands, at least, not for twenty-two dollars. He wondered if Wilbur hadn't recognized in him a rival and parted with the car just to make trouble. But no, that wasn't good sense! *She* liked to ride. Evidently Wilbur hadn't realized that. Cy spat into the grease-stained grass. Well, he would turn the battered old 'bus to good advantage. Wilbur Washburn was set on marrying Ella Eaton, was he? Huh! Cy spat again. So long as he had a car that would run, he guessed Wilbur hadn't much show.

By the middle of the afternoon Cy had the machine in fair shape. The two old men, in their habitual place under the apple tree, saw him climb in and drive to the shed that adjoined the Cleb house on the north side. There he climbed out, and presently they heard the noise of saw and hammer from within.

"What's he makin' the shed into now?" inquired Mr. Washburn.

"A g'rage fer the car. Don't know what he'll make it into when the car's gone. I reckon his ma'd be some s'prised to see that shed now an' know the dif'rent things it's been since she left us."

Mr. Washburn nodded. He remembered that the shed had been built originally as a washhouse, but in accordance with the Neck motto of "making a thing do" it had been altered at various times to serve as a pantry and spring house, then as a wagon shed, then as sleeping quarters for the hired man, then as a carpenter shop—and now it was to become a garage.

"I allus liked it best as a pantry," observed Mr. Cleb, with a faint sigh. "Handy, ye know, to git a snack t'eat just 'fore goin' to bed."

"Ye still cling to that bad habit, David?"

"Can't seem to break m'self of it."

"Me neither," replied Mr. Washburn confidently.

That led to a discussion of other bad but enjoyable habits common to the two, in the midst of which Cy continued to saw and pound. His industry was conclusive proof that he had decided not to act upon his impulse to dynamite the little car.

By Saturday of the following week the garage was completed and the car was in good running order—for such a car. Ella and her mother were due to arrive that day on the noon train. Cy meant to meet them. Although he had little fear of Wilbur, he had decided to make hay right from the start and on all occasions thereafter.

When he chugged up to the station he saw Wilbur sitting in his old surrey and flicking flies off the horse with his whip while he talked with the Widow Gaddis, from the village.

"How are ye, Cy?" Wilbur greeted him. "See you're still runnin' the car." His tone suggested slight surprise.

"Oh, yes, she still runs," replied Cy.

The Widow Gaddis regarded him severely, yet with a flash of mischief in her dark eyes. "Cy," she said in her quick decisive manner, "you made a bad bargain when you bought that car of Wilbur. Own up now, didn't you?"

Cy colored under his tan; somehow the widow always made him feel uncomfortable. She was only forty, and her clear skin and rounded lines made her seem still younger; yet Cy always felt like an awkward boy whenever he talked with her.

"I don't know. Ask Wilbur," he mumbled.

But the widow switched abruptly from the subject. "Who'd you come to meet, Cy?"

Again Cy colored. He shifted uneasily in his seat; his glance wavered, then lifted and met Wilbur's. What he saw in Wilbur's eyes made Cy change his whole plan of campaign and tell what is known on the Neck as a "gray fib."

"Didn't come to meet anybody," he replied, studying the ground, "leastways nobody in p'ticular. Just drove over—thought mebbe there might be somebody who'd want a lift."

"Somebody does, don't they, Wilbur?" said the widow with a little twitch of her mouth that revealed her dimples.

"Somebody does, all right," agreed Wilbur with an emphasis that sounded to Cy malicious.

Then followed a period of silence that grew more and more painful for Cy.

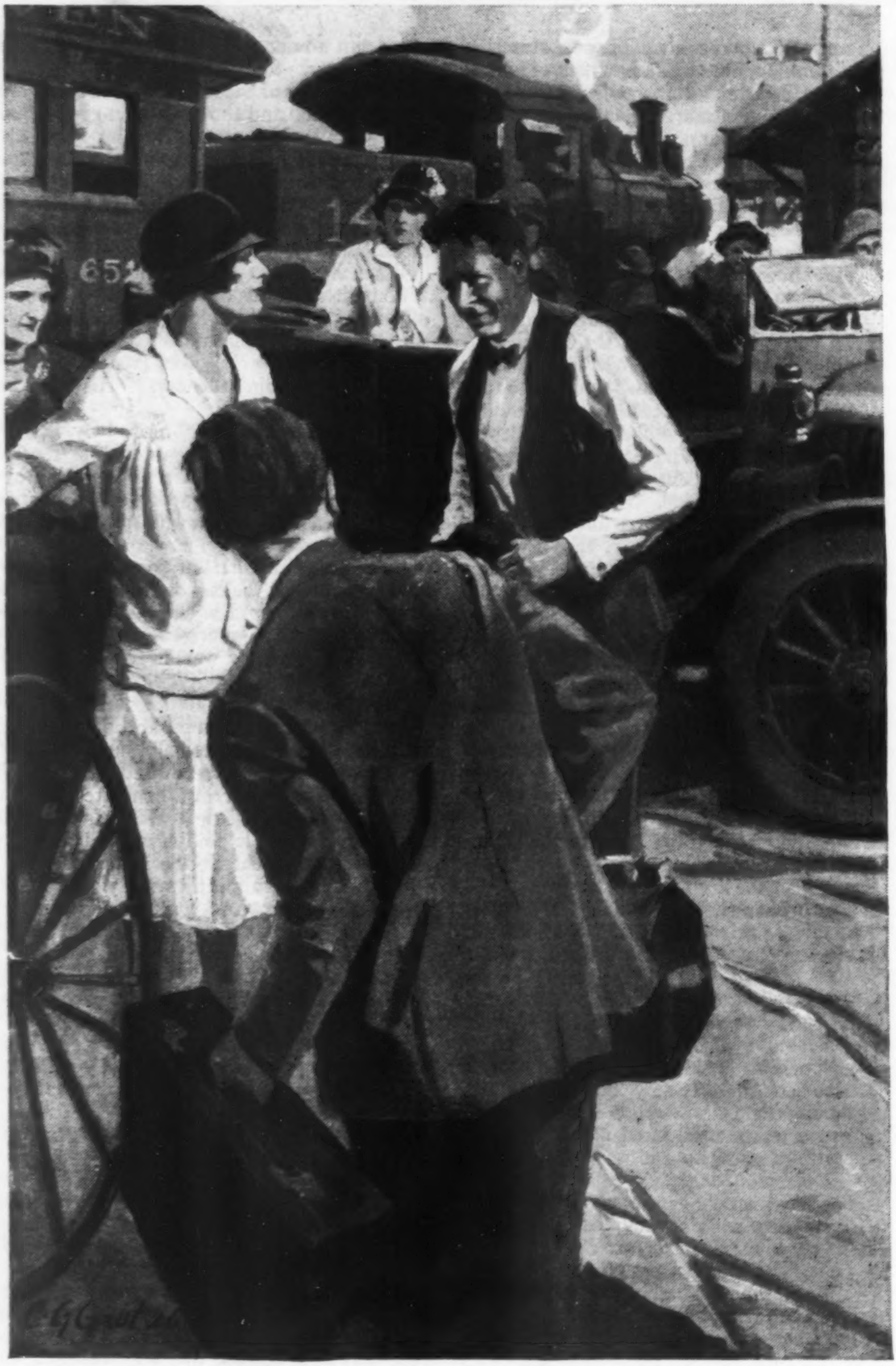
"Who wants a lift?" he inquired, feeling that he could stand it no longer.

"My married sister's comin' to spend a week with me," replied the widow. "It's everlastin'ly good of you, Cy, to be willin' to take us up. I hate to give that Barney Fraser a quarter for just ten minutes' ride in his rattly 'bus."

"No need o' that when Cy's got a car that'll run," observed Wilbur. "Hey, Cy?"

"Glad to do it, Mis' Gaddis," Cy replied. That was another fib, not gray perhaps, but white at any rate.

And so when the train rolled in, late as usual, Cy had the uncomfortable feeling that comes from seeing a rival drive off with the woman



When the train rolled in, late as usual, Cy had the uncomfortable feeling that comes from seeing a rival drive off with the woman you've decided to marry.

you've decided to marry. As he was lifting the valise of the widow's sister into the back of the car, Ella and her mother, accompanied by Wilbur, approached the surrey. Cy greeted them awkwardly and shook hands. Then Wilbur helped them into the vehicle, mounted to the driver's seat, touched the horse's flank with the whip and drove off in triumph.

"Just as fat an' smiling as ever, hey, Cy?" observed the widow when all three were in the car.

"Who?" inquired Cy in feigned surprise.

"Ella Eaton of course. Who else could I mean?" The widow's tone was sharp.

Cy started the engine with a roar. He backed swiftly out from the platform, turned abruptly and, with many squeaks and poundings, started up the hill.

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mrs. Trumbull, clutching the side of the car. "Mary," she added in a lower voice, "does he always drive like this?"

"No; only when he's upset," her sister replied.

Cy was in no state of mind for careful driving. Wilbur had scored heavily against him, and the circumstance angered him. As usual when he was angry, he had a "damn good notion" to do something rash—this time if it was nothing more reckless than merely to pass his adversary on the narrow road that led up the hill. Whether he would have attempted it is perhaps open to question; the fact is that he did not, for when he was only a dozen yards behind the surrey, the car slewed to the right, and he knew by the pull on the wheel that one of the front tires was flat. He stopped the engine and jumped out.

"What's the matter, Cy?" asked the widow.

Cy fingered the tire, then lifted the cushion of the front seat, where he kept his tools. "Flat tire," he said shortly. "You'd better take Frazer's 'bus."

"Not us!" declared Mrs. Gaddis. "Never catch me giving *him* a quarter when I don't have to. I'll help you, Cy." And she climbed down.

In spite of the amount of practice that he had had, it took Cy forty minutes to mend the tire; but his anger was tempered somewhat by the widow's help, and especially by her words. She never had liked Wilbur Washburn! The nerve of him, asking twenty-two dollars for such a car!

"There," said Cy, wiping some of the grease from his hands. "That ought to hold."

"Well, drive more careful now, and mebbe we'll all get home," remarked the widow.

Cy followed her advice, and a quarter of an hour later they reached the widow's house on the hill.

Uncle Davy and Dad Washburn were seated beneath the apple tree, when Cy drove up the lane and parked the car in its usual place in the field.

"He allus stops her exact in the same spot, don't he?" observed Mr. Washburn.

"Never varies," replied his old friend. "There's so much grease right there in that one place, I reckon Cy could find it in the dark, jes' by sniffin'."

"I GUESS mebbe you'll have to admit, David, that my boy means business," continued the other. "Thinks I, when I see him an' the gal go by, 'Wilbur don't reckon on bein' left b'hind if *he* can help it.' "

Mr. Cleb nodded. " 'Twas my boy I reckon got left behind that time, an' it thorns him to think of't."

The two of them gazed meditatively at Cy, who again had the car jacked up and was removing one of the tires. When he drew forth the inner tube he swore softly. The thing was patched in so many places that he was tempted to buy a new one. But, no, he couldn't lay out more money on such a worthless car; it was bad enough to have to buy gasoline and oil to pour into it. He had bought the car for a purpose, and somehow he would make it last until that purpose was fulfilled—in other words, until after the fair Ella had returned to Providence, leaving behind her promise to become Mrs. Cyrus Cleb.

After supper Cy put on a clean shirt and his new black necktie and drove toward Mrs. Emery's boarding-house, at the north end of the Neck, where Ella and her mother were staying. He could have walked there in forty minutes, but walking had certain disadvantages. For one thing, he would have had to pass the Widow Gaddis' place, and he dreaded her laughing eyes and ready tongue. For another, walking would put him to disadvantage beside Wilbur, whereas going to call in an automobile would make Wilbur and his surrey seem ridiculously old fashioned.

Cy passed the widow's safely and, arriving at the boarding-house, saw to his chagrin Wilbur's horse and surrey on the other side of the road and Wilbur and Ella seated upon the porch. They both thought that he was going to stop, but again that day Cy's plan of campaign underwent a change. He only nodded and touched his cap and continued on up the road.

"Dearie me!" exclaimed Ella. "Where did he get such a battered old car?"

"Bought it from me," replied Wilbur and grinned. "Of course," he added hastily, "it was a much better lookin' car when I had it. Cy's no hand to keep things lookin' bright."

What Cy said when he was out of hearing might have blistered the remaining paint on the car. But his disappointment only served to increase his determination to outwit Wilbur.

He decided to return home by a circuitous route, not realizing that by doing so he kept the widow and her sister up an hour longer than they had intended to remain.

"Poor Cy," observed the widow at last, as they watched the surrey go by and heard Wilbur humming softly to himself. "He must've drove right on past without stopping when he saw Wilbur was there."

The sister sniffed. "Well," she said shortly, "I'm thankful I wasn't in that car with him!"

She would have been still more thankful could she have known that Cy had engine trouble when he was on the Shell Road, and that it was not until past midnight when he finally parked the car on the grease spot in the field.

The next two days he spent toying with magnetos, batteries and spark-plugs, much to the interest of the two old men.

"They say," observed Mr. Washburn, "that motor cars has speeded up industry a lot. I ain't so sure about that. Seems to me all the time folks save when they're whizzin' along the road they lose in the g'rage, makin' repairs. Don't it seem so to you, David?"

Mr. Cleb nodded thoughtfully.

"Henry," he said after a long pause, "I don't like to do anybody an injustice—least of all anybody who's in a possible way to become one o' the family—but I do declare I don't think that Eaton gal's a fittin' mate fer my boy—nor fer your'n neither, Henry."

"So?" exclaimed Mr. Washburn. "Ye've been talkin' with her, ain't ye now, David?"

Mr. Cleb shook his head, "I ain't said a word to the gal," he replied, "but I heard her talkin' with that young Bemis feller at the postoffice. He's f'm Boston, ye know."

Mr. Washburn nodded encouragingly and, leaning forward, turned both ears toward his old friend. "What'd ye overhear, David?" he asked eagerly.

"Oh, nothin' scand'lous or the least out o' the way," the other replied hastily. "It just comes to this. Ye know how folks talk about marryin' a furriner. Wal, it's somethin' like that in this p'ticular case. That gal don't b'long on the Neck; she ain't one of us, Henry. As I say, I don't like to do anybody an injustice, so I sha'n't go into p'ticulars; but lemme say this: her ideas an' our'n is a whole lot dif'rent, an' I hope Cy has sense enough to see it."

"Huh," observed Mr. Washburn thoughtfully. "Ye know, David, I put a stock o' value in your opinion, even when ye don't see fit to try an' prove yer p'int. But, David, if you'll p'mit me to say so, jedgin' by Cy's activity on that car, it don't look to me 'sif he'd come to his full senses yet."

"That's fair put," agreed the other. "An' to jedge by the number o' times I see Wilbur drivin' the surrey in the direction o' Mis' Emery's, it don't look t'me 'sif Wilbur was any brighter'n my boy."

Mr. Washburn nodded judicially. The two old men, it appeared, were not partisans in the rivalry of their "boys"; they were merely spectators, and the affair interested them as all things in life interested them.

"Wal," continued Uncle Davy, "I have a sort of a com'table feeling about it jes' the same. Cyrus, fer one, won't do aught that's s'very rash, I feel sartin, an' I give Wilbur credit fer havin' at least as much sense as my boy."

Nevertheless, Cy continued to live like a man with one consuming idea. He was uncommunicative at meals; he worked on his car at all hours; and he avoided the postoffice, where he knew the chief subject of gossip concerned him and Wilbur and the Providence girl.

All that first week Wilbur and the eccentricities of the car kept Cy off the porch of Mrs. Emery's boarding-house. But the following Sunday, encountering Ella after church, he made an appointment with her to go for a ride that afternoon.

"Oh, I was hoping you'd say that!" exclaimed Ella.

Cy returned home, feeling better than he had felt in weeks. He had stolen a march on Wilbur and was to have Ella to himself at last.

Cy had an uncomfortable feeling, as he drove toward the Emery's, that he might find Wilbur sitting on the porch; but Wilbur was not there. Ella was ready and waiting.

The widow, who had seen Cy pass along the road on his way up, was still at the window when he returned, seated beside his fair companion. "She's fair, fat an' forty, if she's a day," remarked Mrs. Gaddis to her sister. "Poor Cy!" Then she breathed deeply and gazed dreamily out across the harbor.

"I declare, Mary," said Mrs. Trumbull, with a shrewd glance at her sister; "anybody'd think you were gettin' tired of living here all alone."

"Mebbe I am," replied Mary Gaddis, still with gaze fixed on the harbor.

THE little car seemed to be on its good behavior that warm, sultry Sunday afternoon. Cy had never known it to run so well, and the fact appeared like a good omen. They left the Neck, crossing the meadows on Quarter Mile Bridge, and continued along the unfrequented south shore—unfrequented because the road was so bad. But Cy didn't mind the bumps; life itself held many bumps, but he would be content to take them all so long as he could take them with Ella.

"Dearie me!" she exclaimed at last. "Cy, let's stop here an' just look at the water. I feel all shook to pieces."

Cy turned the car into the field at the left and came to a stop beside a clump of scrub pines. In front of them lay the broad Atlantic, tossing its waves on the long white beach and sparkling like a vast sheet of sapphire under the sun.

Ella sighed and adjusted herself more comfortably among the cushions that her lover had thoughtfully provided. "Oh, isn't it wonderfully blue!" she said, gazing off across the water.

" 'Tain't any bluer than your eyes," Cy ventured to say.

"Oh, you!" she protested, but Cy saw that she was pleased.

Having made such a good start, he proceeded with unwonted boldness, feeling perhaps that he might never again have so favorable an opportunity. He spoke in general terms of marriage; of its advantages economically, of its desirability from the point of view of complete happiness. Ella sighed. It sounded like a sigh of encouragement, and after a moment of hesitation Cy moved his arm until it rested on the back of the seat a few inches from his companion's plump shoulders.

For some time they sat in silence. Then Cy observed that he thought he would take the job that Gil Burns, the station agent, had offered him last month. "It's a good-payin' job," he explained. "Gil wants me to drive his baggage truck—earn enough during the summer to last all year, if a body's careful. Be more fun too, drivin' Gil's truck than this here car."

Cy cast her a sidelong doubtful glance, but Ella continued, "I hate things that are old, especially clothes. Somehow I never feel right if I have to wear a thing longer than a year. Ma scolds about it, but I suppose I was just born that way."

Cy withdrew his arm from the back of the seat. Ella went right on talking, revealing to her companion her true self, which had been hidden from him those twelve years. Cy was amazed and bewildered at what he heard. Ella Eaton had the tastes of a queen. She was extravagant!

During the next few minutes Cy hardly heard the voice of the woman whom he had made up his mind to marry. With parted lips and eyes fixed on the blue expanse of ocean, he was undergoing a change in his point of view. Unconsciously he edged a few inches away from his companion. She hated things that were old. She didn't feel right if she had to wear clothes longer than a year. She wanted him to *throw his car away!* Throw away a car that had cost him twenty-two dollars! Cy's mouth set, and his under lip protruded slightly. He was suddenly angry with himself—angry for believing himself in love. This wasn't love; it was madness!

"Let's be goin'," he said abruptly.

"So soon?" inquired Ella.

"Better start back early," replied Cy. "No tellin' how many times the car'll git balky 'fore we reach the Neck. Besides, see that bank o' clouds? There's a storm a-brewin'."

As it happened, Cy had to stop twice for repairs before they reached Mrs. Emery's boarding-house. It was after five o'clock therefore when he started back toward home. His eyes were opened and his spirit was chastened; he felt disappointed and at the same time thankful. But Cy was not without a certain sense of sardonic humor, which is characteristic of the natives of the Neck.

"I hope Wilbur gits her," he said to himself. "It'll serve him right!" Decidedly, Cy's point of view had changed.

THE Widow Gaddis and her sister were in the midst of tea, when they heard the rattle and snortings of a car on the roadway, then silence, then a man's voice: "I've a damn good notion to put a hunk o' dynamite under you, you cranky junk heap!"

"That's Cyrus Cleb," said the widow.

She rose, smiling, and walked to the door, where she stood for a few moments with twitching lips and sparkling eyes. Cy was in the road beside his car, hands on hips in an attitude of hopeless exasperation. His face was as dark as the cloud bank that had climbed halfway up the eastern sky. He turned his head, observed the widow in the doorway and suddenly felt sheepish and, as usual, uncomfortable.

"Cy Cleb," said the widow, "let that car be, and come right in here an' have a bite to eat with us! I know you'd ruther stay there an' use bad language, but I mean what I said. You come here!"

Cy grinned half-heartedly and shuffled across the road. The widow held the door open for him, remarking, "So you've had another breakdown? Well, that's what comes from carryin' too big a load. Now you set right down."

Cy grinned in rather a silly way and seated himself at the table opposite Mrs. Trumbull. The widow poured him a cup of tea quite as if she had done it all her life; then she cut more bread and passed him the platter of cold ham and potato salad.

Cy, eating with an appetite undiminished by recent revelations, expected every moment to be obliged to answer some pointed remark about Ella Eaton; but the two women talked only of such commonplace things as the approaching storm, home economics and automobiles.

"If I was you, Cy," observed the widow, "I'd make that car o' yourn over into something useful."

"Huh," said Cy, "been advised to junk it."

The widow looked at him sharply. "Junk a car you paid twenty-two dollars for? How you talk, Cy Cleb! The engine's purty good, ain't it? Well, why don't you put it in yer boat?"

Cy shrugged his shoulders.

"That dory o' yourn'd be right useful if it

[*Continued on page 125*]

Where the President is Neighbor Coolidge

The home town folks in Northampton saw Mr. Coolidge learn the political profession from the bottom up. Back in the days when he served them as a small office-holder he was applying the same methods that make for success in any career

by Peter F. O'Shea

CALVIN COOLIDGE of my town is President of the United States.

Is President Calvin Coolidge an accident? No more an accident than the president of your bank, who has worked his way up from a clerk, or the chairman of the corporation in which you hold stock, who has come up from a workman Any one of us wishing to build up a permanent widely known business might follow the same methods that Calvin Coolidge has pursued in building up a political career.

"WHEN you approach Mr. Coolidge about anything, he will immediately ask you one question: 'What do you want me to do?' After that opening, Mr. Coolidge concludes the business with marvelous speed. At the end you will get one of three answers: (1) 'I can't do what you want.' (2) 'I will look into it and let you know whether I can help you.' (3) 'I will try to get what you want.' If you carry away with you answer No. 2 or 3, you may feel that on departing you are getting out of your own way so that Mr. Coolidge can telephone or dictate a letter to start your affair rolling."

The selection of any one man in a nation-wide election may seem as unexpected as lightning. But is it? I live three houses down the street from Mr. Coolidge, yet it would have been preposterous for the vice-presidential lightning to wander down to hit my house. I was quite safe. So were the other neighbors. We had a lightning rod. The lightning of fate is usually a good shot. Lightning may not hit a given neighborhood often, but if there is something erected and prepared to be hit, when the lightning does come, that is where it hits. And Calvin Coolidge had prepared over long years for the office which a dozen million voters have conferred upon him.

For instance, Coolidge astonishes every one, and baffles Democrats, by his ability to gain the approval of vast numbers of people by one simple stroke, such as advocacy of economy. Much of this silent, uncanny knowledge of people's minds he gained among our Northampton voters, at their homes.

I remember a call that Calvin Coolidge made at our house during one of his candidacies. He came at evening meal time, when he was sure to catch my father in. I was one of the valiant trenchermen, in short trousers, gathered about the festive board. The visitor was invited to come in, and he accepted on condition that nobody should feel it necessary to disturb the proceedings. "Don't let that worry you," said my father. 'Neither you nor Hercules could stop them from eating." To the request for a vote, my father answered that he was already pledged to the other candidate. "I don't even mean that I would have voted for you if you had come earlier," was his scrupulous addition. My father has one of those consciences that will trouble him afterward unless he can look back to complete frankness, no matter how untimely or painful that frankness may have been to himself and its victims. "The city needs stronger opposition by the Democrats," he explained to the young Republican candidate. "It wouldn't hurt to have them win. Other things being equal, I would vote for Democrats this year anyhow."

Mr. Coolidge had started to draw two cigars from his breast pocket, as though they were the only two he carried. He had already learned how it is done. Did he put them back? No. He smiled, and unearthed three additional cigars which he insisted should be accepted. I do not think that he did this merely to ease his mind with the consciousness that he was a good sport even if he had not been a successful vote

[*Continued on page 126*]

MR. COOLIDGE has been in public office almost continuously since he started as councilman from his home ward in Northampton, Massachusetts. For years the Coolidges occupied one-half of the frame house at the right in Massasoit Street, in a typical New England setting of old elms, concrete walks and green lawns.

MANY of the most famous race-track winners of recent years have been developed by Max Hirsch. At his Belmont Park training stables promising thoroughbreds are schooled to step out in fast company.

Thirty Years *on the* Turf

Training thoroughbred race-horses is the specialty of Max Hirsch, who has developed some of the most sensational winners of recent years The forty horses now in his care are valued at over half a million dollars

by William Moffat

TIMES have changed rapidly in the racing world since Max Hirsch made his début as a jockey in the quarter-mile match races once popular in his native Texas. Famous breeders, owners, jockeys and trainers have contributed their bit to the Sport of Kings, which still resists standardization or monotony because every horse has a distinct individuality requiring special handling to bring out his best. One of Max Hirsch's most interesting charges is Sarazen, a brilliant speed marvel on the track but eccentric when off duty.

AMONG the yelling thousands at Belmont Park who watch a Papp or a Man o' War flash by to victory in the Futurity Stakes or who cheer themselves purple at Churchill Downs when a Bubbling Over wins the Kentucky Derby, few ever know what has gone into the training of the thoroughbreds who fight it out in these events. From spring to fall and then the round over again, the racing season reaches its height at one track after another from Saratoga to New Orleans. Day after day through this season hundreds of gallant horses go crashing past the judges' stand to win or lose. And back of each horse is some one man who through months of preparation has done his best to bring that animal up to the pink of physical perfection.

The average race-fan can have little conception of the immensity of the task involved. It is a complicated job, the preparation and training of a horse, whether it be for one of the great stake races like the Preakness, the Latonia Derby, the Belmont, the Hopeful, the Withers, one of the great handicaps like the Dixie or the Suburban, or any one of the other less noted events that are run every day during the season.

Your race-track enthusiast knows in a general way that the horses are "worked." He reads in his paper that certain promising two-year-olds have been "clocked" in satisfactory trials. But of the hundred and one details that must be attended to before a thoroughbred's satisfactory performance in competition, the endless worries that beset a trainer's mind, he has little or no conception. As a matter of fact, it is not easy to picture the job of a first-class trainer who is responsible for the care and conditioning of twenty or thirty horses worth from ten to twenty thousand dollars apiece. He is in fact one of the busiest mortals in the world, with a million details always on his mind, not to mention the anxieties, hopes and fears that pursue him from gray dawn till his temperamental charges are bedded down at night.

Such a man is Max Hirsch, the famous trainer of Sarazen, Gray Lag, Papp, Donnaconna, Flying Cloud and scores of other noted horses. On his record, he ranks easily in the forefront of the younger trainers today, and few, old or young, have had more horses to handle.

Forty-one horses, divided among fifteen different owners, comprise the establishment presided over by Max Hirsch in his extensive stables at Belmont Park. If this does not constitute a record in its proportion of horses and owners, certainly it is entitled to a medal of some kind. It is a most unusual state of affairs and one that the writer, with fifty years' experience on the turf, has hitherto never met.

The value of these horses entrusted to Max Hirsch's care may be safely estimated at not less than $600,000 and this mark is based on the impossible supposition that the sheriff of Nassau County were to make a forced sale. It is very difficult under any circumstances to put an arbitrary price on a high-class race-horse. Then there are many horses in Hirsch's barn that are without a price for the best reasons that the owners would not be tempted to part with them by any offer however large. These horses are fed and trained at a cost to the owners of $7.00 per day, a charge which does not include such incidentals as shoeing, veterinary fees, clipping, etc. It will convey some idea of what it costs nowadays to feed a race-horse when on a purchase of hay, the cost price of which was $500, the freight charges amounted to $700, bringing the cost of the consignment to $1,200 when delivered at Belmont.

The Hirsch barn at Belmont Park is typical of the many complete training stables that have been built there by the Westchester Racing Association. Nothing has been left undone that will conduce to the comfort of the occupants, both equine and human. Forty-four stalls, a blacksmith's shop, boiler room, and saddle room, comprise the main building, surmounted by lofts containing the oats and hay.

An Honor Roll of Famous Horses

AMONG the horses handled by Hirsch that have made their mark are Papp, the beforementioned sprinter who won the Futurity in 1917 and very nearly won the Hopeful as well, On Watch, Norse King, Bo McMillan, Nassau, New Hampshire, Sporting Blood, Gladiator, Georgie and Sailing B. Donnaconna, another one of his horses, is now a successful sire. Then there was Gray Lag, winner of the Suburban, Metropolitan, Saratoga, and Belmont between 1921 and 1923 whom he sold to Sam Hildreth. Last and most famous is that speed marvel Sarazen, winner among many famous races of the International Stakes in which he beat the famous French Champion Epinard. During 1925 alone Sarazen won stakes aggregating $35,135.

To supervise an establishment containing horses like that necessarily involves a tremendous lot of hard work for the man at the head of it. Training a high-class race-horse, you see, requires something more than simply care and attention, though these are indispensable. A successful trainer must be a good judge of horses in the rough, and he must know how to nurse them along as they work up to a fine point of training. The psychology of the animals under his charge is important, for no two of them are alike in temperament and disposition. It is his ability to pick out their weak points, to correct as far as it is humanly possible any inherent faults, mental or physical, that a horse may possess, and to bring out the best that is in him, that makes a successful trainer and differentiates him from merely a careful and painstaking stable foreman. It is a trainer's ability to diagnose each case correctly and apply the proper treatment that makes him a real master.

Max Hirsch was born in Fredericksburg, Texas, and acquired his first experience of horses as a jockey. He used to ride in the quarter-mile match races at one time so popular in his native state. This was in the good old days before racing was regulated to the extent it is today and the owners of those sprinters didn't deposit the jockey's fee in the secretary's office. The office didn't exist and the fee didn't either, unless the rider won, and then he had to be a good collector. It was not long before Hirsch obtained employment close to his birthplace in the training-stable of Messrs. A. H. and D. H. Morris, presided over by Wyndham Morgan. At that time the Morris stable was the leading one in the country. In fact old Morris Park track took its name from these two well-known sportsmen who were prominently identified with racing for many years.

Hirsch finally worked his way up to Sheepshead Bay at the time when Cal Doggett and the late Fred Taral were the leading knights of the pigskin and Tod Sloan was breaking into the limelight at the beginning of his spectacular career. "Tod," says Hirsch, "possessed that indefinable something that is born and not made in a boy. He made horses run for him that another rider could do nothing with, or at any rate not with anything like the same results.

"He wasn't the first to ride with short stirrups —Hayward rode in that fashion before Sloan appeared on the scene—but he was the first to lie right out over his horse's neck. He was not a particularly strong finisher; his chief asset was, as I say, the almost uncanny way in which he could get sour horses to do their best. Perhaps it was his overwhelming confidence in himself, for Tod was chock-full of self conceit, that he imparted to his mount. A horse is a timid animal, when brought face to face with conditions with which he is not familiar, but Tod seemed to be able to make him forget everything except that he had to do his best. That counts for a whole lot in race riding. He didn't believe in punishing a horse and he discarded the use of spurs when we were all wearing them. It was Tod's belief that horses resented being pricked in their sides, and that it didn't help any. I guess he was right at that.

"How do the riders of the present day compare with those of the time when I was riding? That's something you can get up an argument on any time the subject is brought up and of course there are two sides to the question. Some people will tell you that we haven't got any riders nowadays that they're all slatherem whack jockeys, every post a winning post, no judges of pace, and so on. These critics should remember that races are run differently nowadays, that we have more sprint races. Whether that is a good thing for racing I am not going to say. At any rate the boys have less opportunity for becoming judges of pace than in the old days when we used to race over longer distances.

"If I was asked," Hirsch remarked, "who in my opinion was the best jockey we have had in the past thirty-five years, I'd unhesitatingly say Henry Griffin, who was just about winding up his racing career when Sloan appeared on the scene. Griffin had about everything that a jockey should have, perfect seat, good hands, a quick thinker, good from start to finish in every part of a race. Griffin twice won the Futurity, on Requital and Butterfly, during his time as well as being up on Hastings, Henry of Navarre, Clifford, Ramapo, Handspring, and others. Yes, Henry would have to get my vote."

Hirsch's first start as a trainer was made in Chicago where he campaigned a few horses of his own, mostly of the cheaper sort. Then he came East to take charge of the horses belonging to J. V. Lemaire. The first good one he handled for that owner was Beauclaire, with which he won the Washington Cup on the old Bennings track just before our legislators decreed that there should be no more racing in the District of Columbia. Hirsch still has that cup or punch-bowl in his possession, and in its generous dimensions it is the equal of a foot bath. It was built in the pre-Volstead days. With this horse he won the Maxim Stakes at the same track. Several years later Hirsch won the Brooklyn Derby with Norse King, a horse he treasures in his memory.

The next owner with whom Hirsch became associated was George W. Loft, for whom he won many races with a smart filly named Julia Leon. For the same owner he won the Futurity Stakes with that champion sprinter, Papp. The two best horses that Mr. Loft owned, and were trained by Hirsch, were On Watch and Donnaconna, both of which are now at the stud in Kentucky. On Watch was a superior racehorse, winning twenty-one races during his career. With Donnaconna, Hirsch was not so lucky, as a three-year-old that horse winning five firsts, six seconds and four thirds, but his two-year-old offspring racing this year have acquitted themselves well and it is Hirsch's opinion that Donnaconna will prove one of the most successful sires in the country.

While handling the Loft horses, Hirsch was training several others and among them was a two-year-old by Star Shoot, aptly named Sidereal. Star Shoot was favorite sire of Hirsch's great friend, John E. Madden, master of Hamburg Place and the greatest breeder of thoroughbreds in this generation, and Sidereal looked like a great horse. He had been somewhat backward in his training however, and his races in public during the early season of 1921 had not been very encouraging. A week before the big race at Aqueduct on July fourth, however, he showed the watchful trainer a surprisingly good trial that looked fast enough to make him a sure winner. Now although there were at least two very dangerous contenders entered in the race, Hirsch had planned to bet an amount that made winning or losing a serious matter.

It was a case of make or break, of winning a

Shrewd judges of horseflesh have great expectations for this yearling, sired by Man o' War, and photographed with his mother, True Flier. So great is their faith in his possibilities that Mr. Sam Harris, the owner, has been offered the unprecedented price of $30,000 for the untried colt.

Sarazen, bought by Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt on the advice of Hirsch, has won for her nearly a quarter of a million dollars. The photograph was taken after he had won the International Special at Latonia, Kentucky, on October 11, 1924. Despite his marvelous running form, the erratic temperamental defects of the thoroughbred make him a very uncertain quantity in any race.

fortune or going back to scratch. The day was piping hot, the attendance unusually large even for a holiday, and the betting abnormally big in a big year when Morvich was the two-year-old hero. It seemed the golden opportunity that comes once or perhaps twice to a man in his lifetime. The die was cast, it was decided to start, and the van was ordered to bring the colt across from Belmont Park to the Aqueduct track. Everything was in readiness, the chief betting commissioner had his agents posted at every book-maker's elbow awaiting the signal, the jockey was ready, and Hirsch anxiously waited at the entrance gate. But, no van with its precious load appeared in sight. Hirsch was in a perfect frenzy of despair.

Then, at the very last minute the van came jolting up, just in time for Sidereal to get in the race. A quick inspection showed the colt had suffered no ill effects from the jolting. In he went and a little later they were off!

Meanwhile the commissioners had never ceased their endeavors, and the odds against the horse of 30—1, quoted at the opening were hammered down to 2—1. "Won handily by a length and a half" is the brief record of the victory that meant so much to Max. Nearly a million dollars was paid out by the book-makers after the colt won that last race on July fourth, at Aqueduct. It turned out to be the biggest "killing" that was ever successfully brought off by Hirsch.

It was from Hirsch that Hildreth, in the fall after the colt had run third in the Futurity, acquired that exceptionally good horse, Gray Lag, one of the best among the highest-class horses that have faced the barrier in the past decade. Sporting Blood, another topnotcher, was developed by Hirsch and afterward passed into the possession of "Bud" Fisher, the famous cartoonist. Gladiator, a sprinter who could hold his own with the best, was still another who received his early tuition from Hirsch. Georgie, Sailing B, Neddam, and Monastery, all useful money-winners, were at one time in his stable.

Among the forty-one horses Hirsch now has at Belmont undoubtedly—

> "The pride of the basket, the pick of the shop,
> The clipper that stands in the stall at the top"

to quote Whyte-Melville, is Sarazen, the high class and temperamental, unsexed son of High Time and Rush Box for which Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt, on the advice of Hirsch, paid Colonel P. T. Chinn, the well-known Kentucky breeder and horseman, $35,000. Sarazen has won for his owner over $216,000 and is now fourth on the list of the biggest money-winners on the American turf. He is the

Gray Lag was considered the best handicap horse in America in his day. The quality of the chestnut colt was early recognized by Hirsch, who sold him to Sam Hildreth. Gray Lag won at the Suburban, Metropolitan, Saratoga and Belmont meets in the three years from 1921 to 1923.

headliner in every handicap issued by Mr. Vosburgh, the official handicapper of the New York Jockey Club, undoubtedly the best judge of the respective merits of all horses running on our turf today. Developing an erratic behavior as a three-year-old, of which he showed no signs the year before, when as a two-year-old, he was unbeaten, Sarazen is what is termed in newspaperdom a very "colorful" animal.

The stable boys, somewhat matter-of-fact in their estimation of all horses, say he is plain "loco." His habit of interspersing races that are away below par with brilliant performances makes Sarazen the bane of all the men whose business it is to predict probable winners. Likely to do the most unexpected things at the most inopportune moment, he has his trainer guessing all the time, but Hirsch never loses faith in the horse which, when in the right mood, is a speed marvel, a brilliant race-horse over any distance that he has been asked to go.

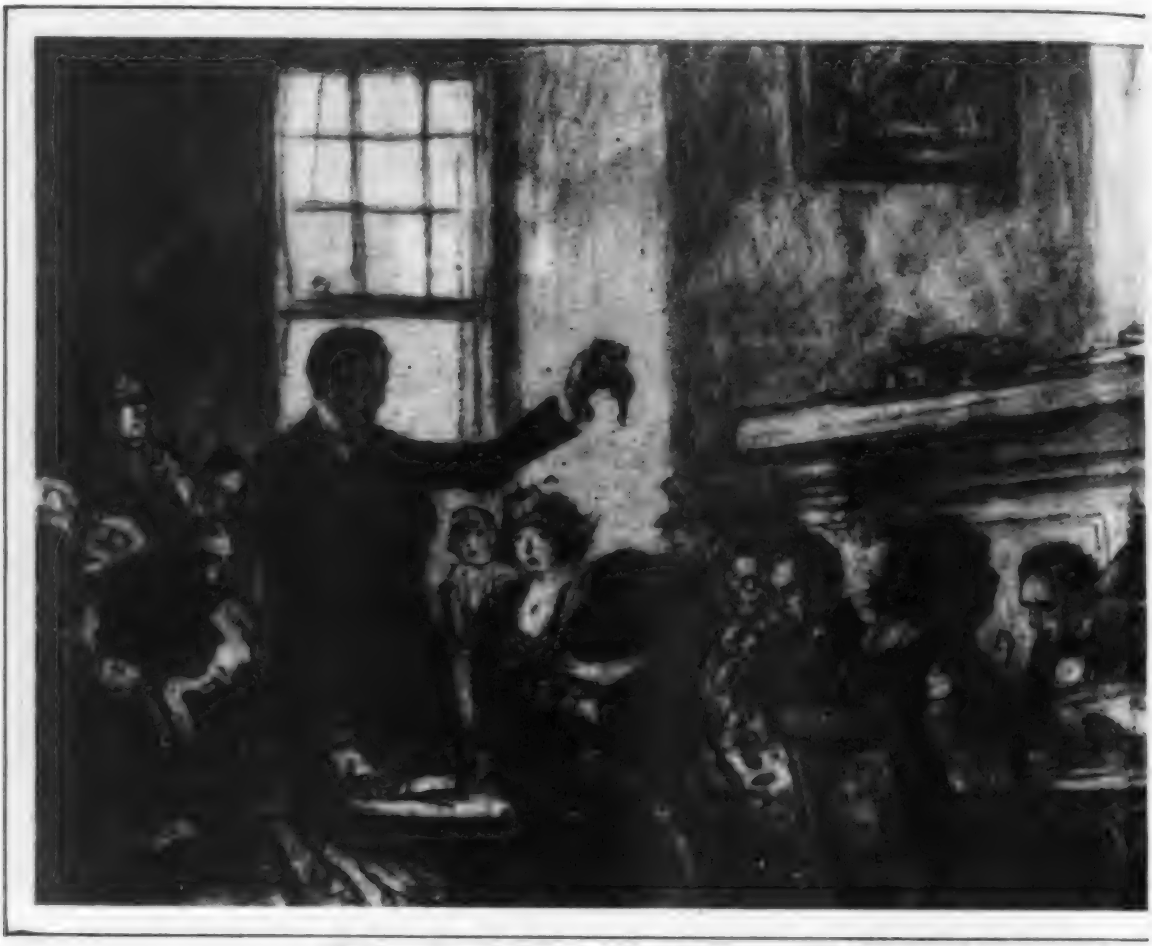
Sarazen is named after the famous golf player because when Colonel Chinn was making one of his periodical trips to Europe, 'Gene Sarazen was a fellow passenger. "If ever I get a yearling that I think is worthy of it 'Gene, I'll call him after you," said the Kentuckian with a touch of dry humor. He got one, and he did. Sarazen's most famous performance was when he won the International Stakes at Latonia beating the French Champion, Epinard, with Mad Play third, although Max Hirsch is inclined to regard his most brilliant performance as having occurred when he won the Maryland Handicap at Laurel, conceding lots of weight to every horse in the race, except Wise Counsellor which finished nowhere.

Another interesting inmate of Hirsch's barn is a yearling, by Man o' War out of True Flier (a mare bred by Harry Payne Whitney, which won seven races as a two-year-old) for whom Mr. Loft has already been offered $30,000. This colt gives every promise of being one of the truly greats and none of the big classic races should miss his presence.

"Do you believe that we attach too much importance to the time test and to establishing new records in our racing?" Hirsch was asked.

"Of course, greater reliance is placed on the watch in America," he explained, "than in any other country where racing is conducted. One of the reasons for this is that all our tracks are nearly uniform in formation and all are level. Some, owing to the different nature of the soil, may be a second to the mile slower than others, but on the whole our tracks are standardized to a degree that does not exist in other countries. This enables comparisons to be made and deductions to be drawn with a degree of

[*Continued on page 131*]



His face went chalky white. "Come, come! This is a lady's bag, remember!"

The Labyrinth

A murder trial becomes the scene of

ALL during the hot stage ride toward Potterville I had been looking forward to a cool and quiet supper hour in the spacious dining-room of the Hotel Federal. From previous experience, I knew that if one waited until seven o'clock one would find the regular patrons served and already in full flight toward their evening indulgences. I was tired and on edge and I wanted my meal and cigar in peace. The food I knew would be indifferent but there was something restful about the quaint ugliness of the dining-room that compensated for any lack in the bill of fare. Besides, when a man is fagged, eating is only a gesture toward the cigar which follows: a cigar and quiet—that was my hope.

To my dismay I opened the dining-room door upon a full house. The long center table was still filled with regular boarders and the smaller tables for transients each had its quota; except one in an extreme corner, upon which I made a determined advance. But, as I drew out a chair, a waitress bustled up and said:

"You can't sit there. That table is reserved!"

In such a circumstance a man always feels affronted—it is just one of those childish, unreasonable impulses that stamps him as

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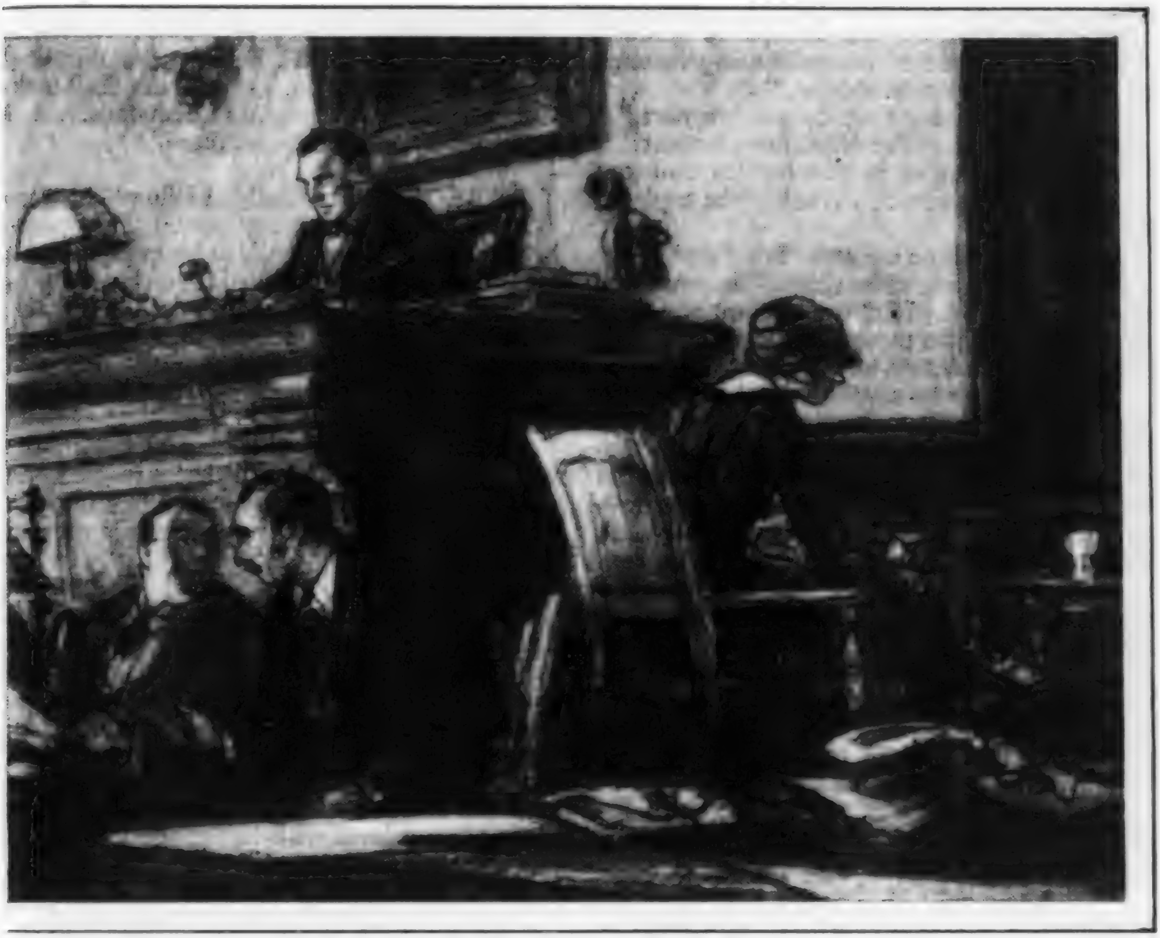


She cried, "No! It is the bag I gave you on the night . . . on the night . . ."

By Charles Caldwell Dobie

Illustrated by R. F. James

a startling revelation of weird talents

completely human and, as I hovered midway between an impulse to defy the waitress or stalk with empty dignity from the room, I felt some one tug at my coat. I turned. A man, unmistakably of the country lawyer type, stood before me.

"Doctor Stanhope?" he inquired. I bowed. "I am sitting alone, over by the window. If you would care to join me I should be delighted."

I followed him, fuming inwardly. But the situation of the table before an open window through which drifted the nocturnal fragrance of California's hill country did much to reconcile me to unsolicited companionship.

"My name is Semple—Peter Semple," said my assumed host, as he poured me a glass of water.

"An attorney?" I hazarded.

"How did you guess?"

I shrugged. "The signs of a man's calling are at once definite and undefinable. . . . You knew for instance that I was a physician."

"Merely by report. . . . A man who so often passes through Potterville occasions remark. . . . You fish in the Heron Falls country, do you not?"

"After a fashion. . . . I dawdle mostly. . . . I mean, what I catch is of no moment. It is solitude that I really go after."

My tone must have carried a significant

note of irritation, for Semple rejoined quickly: "And, when you find companionship instead, you find something distasteful."

"I find something that I do not expect," I parried lamely. "For instance tonight: a crowded dining-room in this hotel. You can imagine my surprise. . . . What is the explanation?"

Semple offered me a cigar. I declined.

"A melodrama at close range," he answered, and as a sudden mild commotion began to spread its contagion through the room he added: "Here come the actors, now."

The signs of a man's calling are at once definite and undefinable. It took only a single glance at the company which filed into the dining-room to forcibly confirm my random observation of the moment before. Actors in fact as well as fancy—troupers to put the matter more exactly. A buxom peroxide of the burlesque type; a broken-down ham actor with proverbial greasy ringlets and frayed cuffs; a hard-boiled soubrette definitely past forty; a diamond-fronted "heavy" exuding vicarious evil; an ingenue pale of skin and pale of lips and pale of hair. In deep black, this last figure, with a cool spiritual beauty—a personality that seemed to float midway between reality and an indefinable eeriness.

"An extraordinary figure," I observed, indicating the pallid face of the girl, with a tilt of my head.

"And a baffling one, too. . . . One of the principals in a recent tragedy. The other is a dumb, dogged, idealistic youth held for murder. . . . You will see him presently. Potterville lacks jail facilities, so a deputy brings him here for his meals. They dine in an adjoining room. But they must pass through here to gain it. . . . When they arrive please keep your eye on the young woman . . . I mean, observe her carefully."

"Is she in mourning?" I asked.

"Yes, it was her father who was murdered."

"By the youth whom we shall see presently?"

"Perhaps."

"There is a doubt, then?"

Semple shrugged. "Everything points to him. He was found bending over the dead man . . . a pistol was in his hand. The girl was in a daze."

"Ah, she was on the scene, also, then."

"Decidedly."

"They are barnstormers, of course."

"Medicine-tent show-people. They offer every known form of entertainment in the calendar. They sing, dance, emote, sell medicine and double in brass."

"Double in brass?" I echoed.

"Yes . . . play in the band before the show starts."

"Surely the pallid lady does none of these ribald things."

"You are right. . . . She is the one glittering exception. GLORIA—THE WORLD-RENOWNED SEERESS is her title. She does a mind-reading act. . . . With the sleek-looking gentleman who sports diamonds. . . . It is trickery, of course, and yet—"

HE BROKE off suddenly; I followed his gaze toward the opening door. They were bringing the accused youth to his evening meal. He came in, his wrist wedded in steel security to the wrist of the deputy—an erect, defiant, almost exalted figure throwing out an unmistakable suggestion of fanatical heroism. Remembering Semple's admonition, I transferred my attention to the girl.

She was casting a fluttering glance in the youth's direction—a glance that struggled and rose and fell back like an ensnared bird into the steady gaze of the sleek gentleman who sported diamonds.

The prisoner and his guard disappeared through an obscure doorway. Most of the company, their curiosity satisfied, scraped back their chairs and prepared to desert the dining-room. The troupe of actors fell heartily upon the food placed before them; all save the pale-faced girl who continued to cast a frozen stare into space. Presently the sleek gentleman took one of her inert hands in his and, placing his eyes on a level with her congealed glance, said something in an undertone. She shivered, smiled and came wanly out of her daze.

I looked up to find Semple's gaze questioningly fixed on me.

"She is completely under the influence of the sleek gentleman," I said, answering his silent query.

"Completely?"

"As completely as hypnosis permits."

"Then you really believe in—"

"In such nonsense?"

Semple flushed. "The idea seems fantastic."

"Not in the slightest. . . . There's nothing fantastic about hypnosis. It simply means the arresting of the conscious mind. I've done it many times in cases of hysteria. The girl's a perfect type. I could put her under myself."

"Really. . . . How?"

"By fixing her attention on me . . . on a single idea . . . or even on some point—preferably a bright disk. . . ." I picked up a glistening spoon as an illustration. "Light reflected on the tip of this spoon would be sufficient to produce a sort of auto-hypnosis in a sensitive person. That really is the principle involved in crystal gazing."

"If you were not a physician—"

"You would not believe me," I finished. "But I am a physician and my knowledge of such matters goes beyond theory."

"Just so." Semple tore the band from a second cigar. "Would you be prepared to say that there is a possible connection between this woman's hypnotic tendency and the murder I have just spoken of?"

"Anything is possible where hypnosis is concerned."

"Then. I may as well tell you: I've been appointed by the State to defend the boy. I need some expert advice."

Semple lit his cigar. I transferred my attention to the pale lady. She suddenly had become transformed with energy. Her eyes were glistening, her cheeks faintly flushed, even her wan hair seemed suddenly lit to lusterful gold. She was laughing. In short amazingly surcharged with the dynamic dash of the sleek gentleman at her elbow. Indeed one might almost say she seemed touched with a satanic force quite at odds with the cool spirituality that had first impressed me.

I turned to Semple. "Let me hear more about the case," I said.

The details were extraordinarily meager. At the end of one of the night performances the members of the company had been pulled from their dressing-rooms by a pistol shot followed by a dying groan. The youth was discovered, gun in hand, bending over the inert figure of the girl's father. The girl herself was standing close by, in a half daze. This tableau was damning enough for the youth, in all conscience, but his dogged silence in the face of questioning seemed to add confirmation to his guilt.

"The girl's father was an actor?" I queried.

"No—the proprietor of the show. . . . An old skin-flint according to report. Reputed to have always carried considerable money about with him on his tours. . . . His name was Parks—Sam Parks. The youth joined the show to earn enough money to complete a college course. And incidentally pick up stage technique. An embryo playwright. He answers to the name of Larry Braden—in all probability assumed."

"But surely the girl has something to say."

"Less than nothing. . . . She maintains that she doesn't remember a single thing. She has a dim recollection of finishing her mind-reading act with Dupont, her partner. But, beyond that she can add nothing to a solution."

"She was with the sleek gentleman, then, just prior to the murder?"

"Apparently."

"That's interesting. . . . But, I must confess, Mr. Semple, I scarcely see where my advice comes in. I'm a physician, not a criminologist."

"Nevertheless, I think you can be of service to me. Would you care to see the prisoner at close range?"

I shrugged. "Whatever you wish," I answered.

WE WENT into the private room where the accused man was dining with his guard. A flicker of resentment passed over the youth's face as we entered, but he smiled when Semple introduced me and made a show of inherent breeding. "An emotional idealist!" was my mental comment, as I took a seat.

"Doctor Stanhope is a specialist in nervous disorders," Semple explained.

An ironical smile played about Braden's mouth. "Insanity stuff, eh! . . . Come, now, Semple, don't try to pull that. . . . I'd much rather hang—upon my word, I would."

"Nonsense!" returned Semple with warmth. "I'm maintaining your innocence. . . . But, damn it all, your indifference taxes my faith. . . . It isn't natural for a man your age to want to die."

Braden turned to me wearily. "I don't know what you've come for, Doctor, but you may as well understand right off; I shan't answer a single question. I shan't respond to a single test. In other words, I reserve the right to order my life as I choose. What I do with it is no concern of any one but myself."

As I looked at his sensitive face, and into his deep-set, fathomless eyes burning with sacrificial fires, I felt my heart leap toward him. Youth, even in its joyous moments gives out a note of pathos, but youth, making an heroic gesture, is a sight for tears.

I was silent for a moment marshaling words for an attack on his bravado. When I spoke my tone was as dry and passionless as I had planned it.

"You know, of course, how your silence is being construed?" His eyes widened for the fraction of a second. "Already, people say you are shielding some one." I paused to give emphasis to my next statement. "Under the circumstances there is only one person whom it is necessary to shield. . . . Whom I think you would be called upon to shield—to the extent of dancing on the air."

I rose as I said this with a suggestion of departure. A slow, soiled pallor began to creep over the youth's face . . . his lips grew colorless. But, the next instant, his composure completely recaptured. He gave me a tolerant smile but made no answer. I bowed, Semple pushed back his chair and without another word we left.

Outside I said to Semple, "He is innocent. But in love—very much in love."

"With the pale-haired lady?"

"Whom else? . . . And one thing more: she is either guilty or he fancies that she is."

"Your shaft struck home magnificently. . . . I have never before witnessed such a subconscious betrayal of a man's secret."

I laughed. "A physician learns how to force confessions. The average patient always withholds significant facts. . . . I should like to see the pale-haired lady and her sleek friend in action."

"You mean you would like to see their act? . . ." He looked at his watch. "We have all evening. The show has just started and they come last on the bill."

"Let us wait until the last moment, then."

"Exactly. . . . We shall not need to start until ten o'clock."

WE ARRIVED at the tent, erected in a vacant lot on the fringe of town, in the midst of a tabloid thriller boiled down from one of the melodramatic successes of the artless nineties. The entire troupe was performing except Gloria, The Renowned Seeress. Ordinarily the crudities of the play, to say nothing of the acting, would have been amusing but I could not shake myself free of the memory of the youth we had just quitted. I could still see his eyes lit with tragic exaltation which amounted almost to fanaticism. Immaturity bent on immolation is a profoundly disturbing thing even to a casual onlooker—if one could be a casual onlooker at such a circumstance. I was deep in this final speculation when a mild patter of applause made me realize that the curtain had dropped.

"The mind-reading act comes next," said Semple.

I roused myself. A youth was playing "Pale Hands" upon a folding organ and the audience, waiting upon the threshold of a pseudo mystery, began to release anticipatory shivers.

The curtain rose again upon a cleared stage. The sleek gentleman, Dupont, came stalking on in pompous dignity, leading Gloria by the hand. She was quite charming in loose, Greek tunic caught up at her bosom by straps of silver. A silver band was in her hair and she wore sandals. Dupont threw out a few pattering phrases and after blindfolding her, immediately descended into the audience. To anyone who has seen such an act it will not be necessary to describe what followed. "What have I in my hands?" "A hat—a straw hat!" "And what are the initials on the band?" "J—J—" "Come, now, I said what are the initials?" "J—J. W." "Correct! What am I holding now?" And so on.

At first, the whole performance was uninspired and dull, and the lady neither quick nor too correct in her replies.

"How does it impress you?" inquired Semple, turning to me.

"Either the girl is thick-witted or Dupont isn't skillful with his signals." I answered.

But presently Gloria's manner became more confident, more assured, and her replies were shot back with unerring swiftness and accuracy. I concentrated all my attention on her.

"What now?" came from Semple.

"She's getting ahead of his question. . . . She's—she's reading his mind."

"You mean he's got her under?"

"To a certain extent. . . . Even though she's blindfolded you can see evidences of a daze. . . . Just in the way she holds herself—in the way she gropes with her hands."

"I see what you mean. . . . His signals mean nothing to her? . . . Are you convinced? . . . Shall we wait any longer?"

"Yes . . . let's watch them take a curtain."

Almost at that moment, Dupont threw out his last question and at the conclusion of her answer leaped upon the stage. She stood, with uplifted hands, looking for all the world like a figure of justice, confused, as he tore the bandage from her eyes. The applause was deafening.

He whispered something to her. She nodded to him and bowed to the audience. But her eyes were sightless and her hands continued in an attitude of frozen supplication. Dupont signaled impatiently for the curtain to fall.

"That," I said in an undertone to Semple, "must have been her condition the night of the murder."

"Then, as a witness, she will prove quite hopeless."

"Unless upon the witness stand you can get her under. . . . It is only in an hypnotic state that her mind will release the truth."

"Would you be willing to appear in court and testify to that effect?"

"When?"

"Tomorrow."

"I was going fishing tomorrow."

"Yes . . . but my dear doctor . . . surely—"

"My testimony will be of no value. Hypnotism itself is the only solution and no judge would permit that for a moment."

"We can try. . . . One never knows until one tries."

"You're catching at straws, Semple."

"Simply because there isn't anything else left to catch at."

"Very well," I said, impatiently, "I'll stay."

IT IS extraordinary how quickly news travels in a small town. By sunrise it seemed that every living soul in Potterville knew that I had been pressed into the case to aid the defense, although in what capacity was still a matter of vague conjecture. I had my breakfast sent up to my room—the prospect of running the gauntlet of a score of curious eyes in the dining-room was not to my taste. . . . Halfway through my first cup of coffee, I heard a discreet tap upon my door. I rose and opened it: Gloria, the Renowned Seeress, stood opposite me. She was alone.

"May I come in?" she inquired, in a thin but flute-like voice that had the same fluttering quality which her glance and hands seemed always to betray. The room was in disorder, my clothes strewn about, the bed unmade.

She saw at once my embarrassment. "This is a silly hour for a call," she went on, "but I rose early on purpose. And then, a trouper like me is accustomed to taking things as I find them."

There was nothing for me to do but capitulate; I bowed her in. She had on a purple dressing gown and her hair hung in two thick braids across her shoulders. Youthful and charming and fresh she looked without the slightest suggestion of the artificialities of her profession. I understood completely the spell which she had cast over Larry Braden, the appeal of her fragile inadequacy. I begged her to be seated. She shook her head.

"Is—is it true," she said, "that you have a plan to save him?"

A perverse wish to tease, descended on me. "*Him?*" I questioned.

"Ah, you know who I meant . . . You must know! . . . The only one of us who is in trouble."

It is impossible for me to describe the mingled tenderness and pathos and poignant despair that crept into her voice. She did not name him because she could not, because her lips had not the fortitude to be so coldly specific. *The only one of us who is in trouble.* The only one who was in trouble *in the whole world* was what she meant. I wished at that moment that I might have found it easy to buoy her with even a tenuous hope but my professional candor forced me to reply:

"Nothing so ambitious as a plan. . . . Under the circumstances, my dear young lady, we are reduced to catching at straws." I looked at her severely. "Those who can aid us are either unwilling or incapable."

She shrank back. "No . . . no . . . no! Not unwilling. . . . You can't believe that of me! . . . But there are times when . . . when up here—" she touched her head—"everything is dim, confused, vague."

"Yes . . . precisely. . . . Our plan, as you call it, will brush the cobwebs away. . . . And, then, we shall have the truth."

SHE flung herself down quite suddenly into a chair, covering her face with her hands. "He is innocent of course! And yet . . . Why, oh, why!" She shivered and withdrew her hands, looking at me with an eager glance. "Only last week we were all so happy. . . . He used to tell me his plans. He was ambitious and talented. . . . He had written a play. . . . Oh, if you only knew how I want to help him! . . . And I cannot! . . . I cannot!"

She was reciting a litany of love to me and she did not know it. I thought again of Braden and his capacity for self-sacrifice. Two fledgling creatures, these, taking eager wing—he magnificently, she unsteadily. And again I thought: What lay back of the boy's heroics? Did he suspect the worst or did he know it? Were these little fluttering hands really stained with a father's blood? And, if so, had I, had *any one* the right to deny youth the chivalry it was bent on achieving? If he were prepared and willing to die for his lady was not that, after all, his affair? There are some points of conduct which a third person may not touch with complete honor.

In the intensity of my preoccupation I found myself staring at her searchingly. She answered with an arrested glance that hovered midway between surrender and a vague resistance.

Realization broke over me with sudden force. The woman before me was yielding unmistakably to my unconscious dominance. Already I had her partially under my spell. We were alone. This was the opportunity to brush the cobwebs away—to learn whether the truth was Larry Braden's affair or mine. To realize, in short, whether my path lay in the direction of a Potterville court-room or along the willow-hedged streams of Heron Creek.

She turned her head away.

"Look at me!" I said sharply.

Her hands fluttered helplessly upward.

"Look at me," I repeated more soothingly.

She gave a deep sigh and her eyes came back again to mine.

Her response was so swift, so almost eager, that it was easy to see how effectively a sinister influence could operate. My impression of the previous night that she was a perfect subject for psychic control was more than confirmed.

But it is a solemn thing to possess a fellow creature's consciousness, to have the power to coax the deep springs of human reserve and reticence to the surface. And never in my life have I felt this so strongly as on this mid-summer morning, sitting opposite a woman whose parted lips were ready to move in revelation at my slightest bidding. For it was the first time that I had ever resorted to hypnosis except in a professional capacity—as a mere stepping stone to health through suggestion. Never before had I sought to use it as a means to wrest a hidden secret from a human heart. Yet, I knew that I had my justification.

I took her two hands in mine. "I want you to look deep into your soul," I commanded gently, "into that other self and tell me what you see there. . . . Do you understand?"

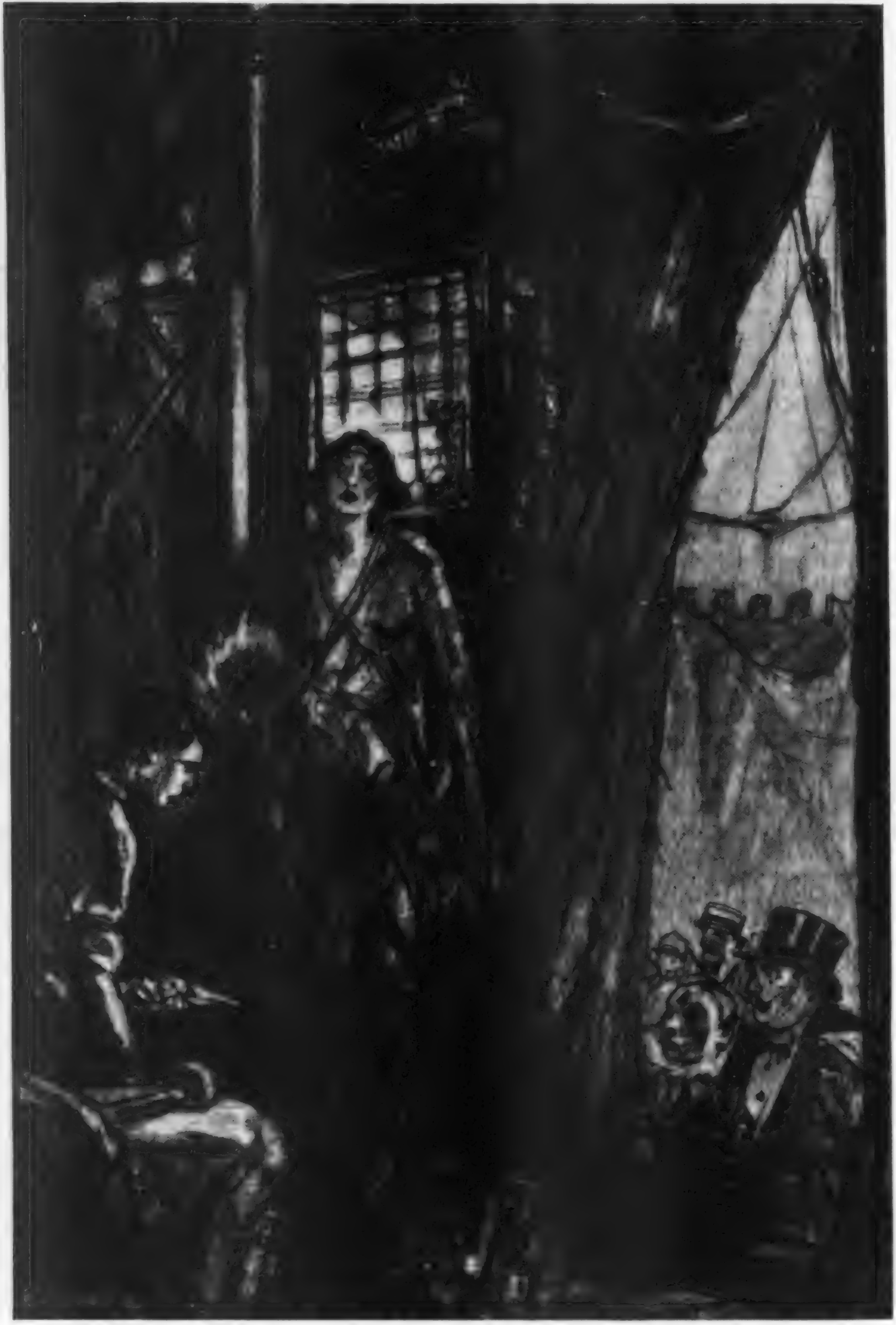
"Yes," she whispered.

"Something has been troubling you, Gloria. . . . You have become entangled in a labyrinth and lost your way. I want you to take me with you into that labyrinth so that together we may discover a path leading out. . . . Will you do this, Gloria?"

"Yes," she breathed again.

"Come, then, take me with you and tell me everything that lies beneath the surface."

"Yes," she said a third time and her smile



Everything pointed to him. . . . He was found bending over the dead man . . . a pistol was in his hand. The girl was in a daze.

was full of the peace of a soul upon the threshold of confession.

It did not come easily—her story, but I led her bit by bit, step by step, fighting our way to the light. So many shadowy forms drifted across the screen of memory, people and events and places that led into blind alleys. But gradually out of the mass of irrelevance emerged significant figures and circumstances. Felix Dupont, her sleek partner was there, and old Sam Parks her father, and Larry Braden. Fear and duty and love made flesh. And, money—money in bags that she was continually searching for.

"You searched for money, Gloria? . . . Why?"

"Because Felix Dupont told me to."

"And you never found it, Gloria?"

"Not at once. . . ." But, finally, her face quickened with a sharp, childish glee—"oh, yes, finally I found it!"

"When, Gloria?—when did you find the money?"

"On the night—on the night—"

"Yes, Gloria."

"On the night my father was murdered."

WE HALTED there upon that fact—resting a moment like tired wayfarers before a last upward thrust toward the heights.

"You found money on the night your father was murdered. His money, Gloria?" She nodded. "Who killed him, Gloria—can you tell me that?"

I confess that my heart seemed to stand strangely still as I waited for her answer.

"It—it was dark," she whispered.

"But you must know who fired the fatal shot, Gloria," I said with a trace of severity in my tone.

"It was dark," she said, and her lips were stubborn.

"Think, Gloria," I pleaded. "Try to remember. So much depends on just that."

She shook her head. "It was dark," she insisted.

"Who was there, Gloria? . . . Was Felix Dupont there?"

"Yes . . . oh, yes!" she cried, eagerly.

"And Larry? . . . was Larry there?"

"Not—not until after."

"Not until after the shot—the shot in the dark."

I paused again. "And did you fire that shot in the dark, Gloria? . . . Think deeply, was it you?"

She was silent and over her face there crept a phantom cloud.

"You do not fear me, Gloria. Then, tell me all—everything. . . . See, there is no one here but you and me. Just us two seeking a way out. . . . Think, Gloria! Did you fire the fatal shot?"

The cloud that had darkened her brow cleared.

"Why, no!" she answered. "I heard it—but I did not fire it."

I caught my breath. "Thank God!" I heard myself say. For I knew, now, that my path did not lie along the willow-hedged streams of the Heron Creek country.

Once she left my room I sent for Semple. He came back with my messenger. I could see by his face that he fancied I was preparing to desert him.

"We must use every means to persuade the Court to put over our plan," I insisted.

"You suspect—"

"I suspect nobody. . . . I *know*. Felix Dupont fired the fatal shot. In a scuffle with old Parks over a bag of money. The girl was standing in the wings in a hypnotic daze. It is easy to complete the picture: Dupont fading out, Larry Braden rushing in. Doubtless the smoking pistol was in Gloria's hands by that time. . . ."

"How have you learned all this?"

I told him.

"Then, the boy *is* sacrificing himself!"

"Have you ever doubted it? . . . Ah, my friend, youth is pathetic and heroic and magnificent, all in one. . . . What time does Court convene?"

"At ten o'clock. Let us be on our way."

We went out into the morning sunshine. The day promised to be warm but there still lingered in the air a trace of mountain tang—the heritage of nightfall in high altitudes.

We found even the aisles of the court-room crowded; it was not often that a town the size of Potterville had a chance to indulge in the drama of a murder trial. But, at our appearance, a buzz of comment galloped through the room and instinctively a path opened to give us entrance. Most of the troupe were seated in an enclosure reserved for witnesses. Semple drew up a chair for me at the long table given over to counsel and withdrew a moment into an antechamber to wait for the prisoner.

He had scarcely quitted the room when Gloria entered leaning upon Dupont's arm. Her face was dull and her step languid; the reaction from that illuminating hour spent with me, I thought, not without irony. Dupont was perfection in the role of the tender and solicitous friend. He hovered about her with almost paternal concern. Ah, if he could but have known how recently his prey had eluded him! The little leap of satisfaction which my heart had given died as suddenly. What did my knowledge really profit me? As testimony it was worthless.

A further sense of my inadequacy swept me with the entrance into the court-room of Larry Braden. Not that he shambled or seemed cast down. Quite the contrary. His body was erect and disdainful and a high color burned on his cheeks. He was not granting his audience even the concession of prison pallor. A whispered comment — decidedly unfavorable — crept through the room. Public opinion always wants its accused supplicant and sniveling. But, Larry Braden asked no quarter and people who ask no quarter rarely receive any. I felt that his fate would be without compromise. In short, that only a miracle could save him. That the precise terms of the miracle were known to me in no wise lessened my anxiety—knowledge is not always power.

The judge took his seat, the jury shifted about and settled itself, the usual preliminaries were gone through and the trial began where it had left off yesterday. Semple had come in and was sitting at my elbow. I leaned toward him:

"Shall you ask for an hypnotic demonstration at once?" I whispered.

"Not until Gloria is put on the stand."

I settled back in my chair, for the moment relieved. In the present instance uncertainty had the merit of supporting hope.

THE first witness called was the oily-haired ham actor. A simple, lovable, strutting bit of egotism hugely enjoying the spot-light. The district attorney questioned shrewdly until every unimportant and trivial delinquency of Larry Braden's entire career with the Sam Parks Medicine Show had been expanded into events significant and devastating. Larry had quarreled with old Sam Parks; he had been impertinent to Mr. Dupont; he had wasted time discussing impious subjects with Mike, the scene-shifter; he had been known to swear; once he had been slightly tipsy. He had a library of books on subjects that folks of the common or garden variety were inclined to view with suspicion. And more than all this, he was skilled in the use of firearms. The witness had seen him on one occasion shatter eight out of ten soda-pop bottles at fifty paces. And he wrote plays which no self-respecting actor would think of lending his talents to. In fact, under the dramatic exaggeration of the witness's testimony, Larry Braden emerged a very reckless, dashing, devil-of-a-fellow. Which would have served him mightily in any other situation than the one in which he found himself.

There followed the burlesque queen, the ingénue of uncertain age, the juvenile, even Ah Fong, a wily Chinese who cooked for the outfit. The same steady drop of innuendo was directed against the integrity of Larry Braden. Only Ah Fong refused to be beguiled by the music of his own voice into any damaging evidence, unwitting or otherwise. To any and every question he gave the same reply.

"Him good boy . . . heap good!"

Threats, cajoleries, cross-examination, nothing swerved him from giving voice to his sentiments. And his final words to an exasperated district attorney, as he left the stand were.

"Him good boy . . . heap good!"

Simple and profound and faithful Ah Fong! If there had been more stubborn and loyal testimony like his, I should have not felt my heart contract whenever I looked at the youth with uptilted chin and flushed cheeks defying the laughter of the gods.

Without warning, at the conclusion of Ah Fong's testimony, Gloria Parks was called to the stand. There was an audible stir in the jury-box. She took her place with a worn, tired simplicity and was sworn. Larry Braden tightened his lips. A shaft of sunlight coming through a side window fell upon her pale hair, lighting it to a living gold.

The district attorney's questioning was brief. He sought merely to establish the fact that Gloria was subject to fainting spells when fatigued. That one of these fainting spells had overtaken her the night of her father's murder. That she had recovered consciousness to find her father dead and the entire troupe in consternation.

"That was the first realization that there was anything wrong?"

"Yes."

"What next do you remember?"

"Mr.—Mr. Dupont was telling me to be brave."

"And where was the defendant?"

"He was standing staring at me—somebody was holding him."

"Did he have anything in his hands?"

Gloria shuddered. "Yes . . . a pistol!"

"That is all," exclaimed the district attorney, flashing a glance of triumph at the jury. "Mr. Semple, you may have the witness."

Semple rose—a simple figure grown commanding by reason of his profound earnestness. The audience, receiving the impact of his quiet zeal, watched breathless.

"Miss Parks, are you quite sure that the mental vagueness you have described as overcoming you on the night of your father's murder was due altogether to a fainting condition? . . . Are there not times when you feel uncertain of your consciousness? when you have a peculiar sense of impressions beyond your control?"

Gloria leaned forward: her hands were clasped against her breast. "You mean shadows—figures—ideas—"

"I mean just that."

"Yes—I often have them."

"When you are alone?"

"No, seldom then."

"Ah, in the presence of others! . . . You have them in the presence of others—say, for instance, when Mr. Dupont is about?"

"Oh, yes!"

"More than in the presence of any one else?"

"Oh, yes, decidedly more!"

"Can you describe any of these impressions?"

"They come and go . . . "

"In other words they elude you. As a dream often does?"

"Yes."

"Yet, you feel that under certain conditions you could recapture them again—very much as one re-dreams a previous dream that one has been unable to remember?"

"Yes."

"Your honor, I am about to make a request."

"State it, Mr. Semple."

"The witness has just testified that there are times when her mind is sensitive to impressions which under ordinary conditions cannot be revived. It is the belief of the defense that there were impressions of this character received by Miss Parks on the night of her father's murder—impressions which she cannot without assistance make clear. . . . Doctor Stanhope will you please rise."

I ROSE, bowed to the judge and then quietly resumed my seat.

"Doctor Stanhope is an authority on hysteria —especially hysteria induced by hypnosis. He feels himself in a position therefore to work upon the witness's mind in such a manner to assist her in formulating her shadowy impressions. I therefore beg the court to permit Doctor Stanhope to demonstrate his ability."

At once the entire court-room was in an uproar.

The judge rapped for order. Then he leaned forward, his cold gray eyes fixed with judicial incredulity on Semple. My heart sank.

"Do I understand, Mr. Semple, that you are seriously requesting the court to permit a witness to yield to hypnotic suggestion for the purpose of testifying? . . . The petition is denied, emphatically denied! . . . I cannot permit any one's testimony to be influenced scientifically or otherwise!"

Semple squared himself for a supreme thrust. "I submit that it has already been influenced!" he cried dramatically.

"Explain yourself."

"I charge that the witness has, at times, been strongly under the influence of her partner, Felix Dupont—that she was under this influence during their mind-reading act and that she was under this influence on the night of her father's death!"

The district attorney leaped to his feet. The judge halted his objections with uplifted hand. "Mr. Semple, your remarks are highly improper. Your duty is to prove your case by examination of witnesses and by no other means."

"It is impossible for me to examine a witness who is not in full possession of her faculties."

The district attorney's explosive manner melted into suspicious suavity. "Your honor," he began calmly, "since Mr. Semple is so ready to call in expert advice he may not be adverse to a simple demonstration. Permit Miss Parks and Mr. Dupont to give a sample of their act here. That, I think, will dispose of this absurd charge of hypnosis."

I made a discreet signal of assent to Semple. But it miscarried and to my dismay I heard him voicing an emphatic objection. A stifled cry came from the witness stand. Gloria had fainted.

My first concern was for this stricken girl. Fortunately I had a restorative in my pocket. I called for a glass of water which was instantly produced. Lacking a spoon I stirred in the medicine with a silver pencil. Gloria revived swiftly and smiled out her thanks. I turned from her to catch a glimpse of Semple pacing the corridor. I set the empty glass down and went out to him.

"Whatever possessed you to object to the mind-reading demonstration?" I demanded in an undertone.

"You don't mean to say you want her under Dupont's influence, do you?"

"Anybody's so long as the trick is done! Let's hope he isn't too wise for us. If he should get her under, question her swiftly. I'm powerless, now, unless I can catch her eye. Only Dupont or a miracle can open her subconscious mind."

A warning rap upon the judge's desk told us that the recess was over. We went in and resumed our seats. The district attorney repeated his request to have the mind-reading act performed. Semple withdrew his objection. The judge assented.

Felix Dupont rose and made his way to Gloria's side. Instantly Gloria seemed surcharged with animation as her glance traveled with swift intuition toward his. My spirits rose. Dupont was walking too completely into the trap. But my elation was short-lived. Felix Dupont was not to be snared so easily. He avoided the girl's eyes, deliberately.

"Ordinarily," he explained to the judge, "the lady is blindfolded. But if I turn her chair, so, toward your honor, it will not be necessary."

And suiting his action to his words he turned Gloria's chair at an angle toward the judge's bench which completely shut the audience from her view. Then, with a little dramatic flourish he began moving about the spectators, picking up hats, gloves, card-cases, coins, and calling upon Gloria in emphatic staccato to name each object in turn. Suddenly I saw Gloria start almost imperceptibly and her gaze became slightly fixed. I followed the line of her vision. A tiny prick of light was gleaming just below the top of the judge's table. I looked again. The glass from which Gloria had drunk her medicine was lying on a ledge where I had left it in

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His Yes Means Millions

D. J. Keith's opinion of a show often makes or unmakes a Broadway production although he has never written a review in his life. For thirty years he has had extraordinary success in his advance selection of winners

by John K. Winkler

FOUR years ago a timorous little comedy slipped humbly into a metropolitan theater. The critics mocked the production. "Amateurish," "hopelessly out of date," "an insult to modern intelligence," "tiresome hokum" were a few of the off-hand estimates that slipped facilely from the phrase bags of the journalists.

BROKERS who sell ten million theater tickets a year rely exclusively on one man's shrewd judgment of new plays. Mr. Keith has his own simple standards of selection. He asks: Does the play touch the tenderness of our souls? Does it cause the average man or woman to say, "I know people like that"? Does it express the aspirations of the average person? Has it a problem that comes home to millions? And, above all, will folks talk about it and advise others to see it?

The show made its bow Monday evening. By Wednesday matinée, the third performance, it seemed about time to call the coroner.

Wednesday afternoon, by actual count, there were eleven persons in the audience. The general atmosphere was that of a wet evening in a mortuary parlor.

The actors were limping through their lines. Their mental color scheme was indigo blue. Gone was that all-pervading optimism and frothy enthusiasm of a paper-packed first-night house. The play's run had become a crawl, a rout. Everybody knew it from call boy to leading lady.

So, on this particular Wednesday afternoon, the panic was on. The blight of failure had settled like a cloud upon a stage and an auditorium, ninety-nine per cent. empty.

Suddenly there came an interruption. It was in the midst of the second act. A man in the audience half rose from his seat and called to the actors.

"Come on, folks. Put your souls in your work. You've got something. Don't lose heart!"

There was an electric change in the acting. A spark of some sort flew from the man in the orchestra to the people on the stage. Speeches that had been tepidly delivered flowed over the footlights like lava.

The men and women on the stage began to *act*. The stage characters sprang into vibrant life—became dynamic, magnetic. From this moment on the company played to the man who'd interrupted the performance, a little man, partly bald, with keen, perceptive eyes veiled behind old fashioned nose glasses.

Thence, to its happy finale, "Abie's Irish Rose" was played with all the enthusiasm with which it had been performed at rehearsals and on the road.

When the last curtain fell and Abie and Rosie's path had been smoothed for life, the little man walked out wiping his glasses. An hour later, a group of ticket brokers in New York astonished Miss Anne Nichols and her associates by putting in a bid for $10,000 worth of advance tickets with an additional guarantee of four-weeks' steady sale.

The man who tossed a verbal life-line to "Abie's Irish Rose" across the footlights that chilly afternoon four years ago was David Joseph Keith, perhaps the most powerful personality in the American theater.

For thirty years, D. J. Keith has traveled the length and breadth of the country "scouting" shows for the group of ticket offices dominated by his brother-in-law, the famous Joe Leblang.

"Who is it comes to save the show," Will B. Johnstone sang at a private dinner a couple of years ago, "when everything else begins to blow? JOE LEBLANG!"

With a yearly turn-over of $15,000,000 and an average daily sale of 20,000 tickets, the Leblang group controls eighty per cent. of this form of popular brokerage. Customers, and they hail from all over the world, number almost 10,000,000 yearly.

This mighty clientele, milliner and millionaire, plumber and prince, bride and bootlegger,

[*Continued on page 133*]

ONE of the most powerful personalities in the American theatrical world is seldom heard of by the public. He is David Joseph Keith, who "scouts" new shows for the Public Service Ticket Offices of New York. His report on an out-of-town opening may make or break a new play, for his brokers sell an average of twenty thousand tickets a day and often purchase the choicest seats in the house for weeks in advance. Mr. Keith has been associated with the theater in one capacity or another since he was ten years old.

CAVALLERIA
RUSTICANA
PAGLIACCI

CHARLES P. REINHARD, of Union, Missouri, had never been in a cob pipe factory when he retired as a general merchant and took over the management of one twenty years ago. Today his is one of the biggest factories. The American corn cob dates back to the early Seventies, when a scissors grinder bored out a few nubbins and fitted them with weed stems.

Farming *for* Corn-Cob Pipes

Franklin County, Missouri, produces ninety-five per cent. of the world's cob pipes. Charles P. Reinhard gets the biggest cobs grown by supplying special seed corn to farmers and lending them special machinery to shell it

by Earl Chapin May

IT IS a far cry from the homely hand-made corn-cob of the pioneer to the highly finished aristocrat of pipedom. The once humble cob is now turned out in two hundred and fifty varieties and supports a flourishing industry in the heart of Missouri's corn belt. All the world turns to one little town of less than three thousand population for its daily supply of fifty thousand cob pipes.

A DUSTY eastbound touring car paused to pant in the courthouse square of Union, Missouri, while two Argonauts of the automobile surveyed the rolling landscape.

"Some hills on this Kansas City-St. Louis road," one tourist complained to his companion.

"The last fifty miles are the toughest," the other tourist acquiesced, carefully examining his map of Route 12.

A smooth-faced, spectacled young man emerged from a white-painted building bearing the black-lettered legend, "The Republican-Tribune." "Good morning, gentlemen," he said, "I'm Herbert Steinbeck, of this paper."

"Nice new courthouse you have here, brother," the first tourist volunteered.

"Yes sir," the spectacled young man replied with pride, "cost $250,000. Pretty good for Franklin County's 28,000 people."

"Anything else of interest here?" the second tourist inquired.

"Yes, indeed, sir. You should see our cob pipe factory."

"Cob pipe factory?" the touring twain chorused. "What do they make cob pipes from?"

"Corn-cobs, of course," Herbert hastened to assure them. "What would they make them from?"

"Well, I don't know," the first tourist dubiously confessed. "We stopped at Hermann, up the road, to investigate the famous Starke wine cellars and all we found there were mushrooms. In this age of substitution you don't know what to expect."

"Cob pipes are made from corn-cobs," Herbert asserted positively.

"This is Missouri. We're willing to be shown," the touring twain agreed.

"Turn to the right at the Union Furniture Company's store, across the Rock Island tracks, stop at the National Cob Pipe Works and ask for Charley Reinhard," Herbert cheerfully advised. "Reinhard is the boss pipe maker of these parts, and right here in Franklin County we produce ninety-five per cent. of the world's cob pipes."

And so the tourists, in that highland Missouri city of 2,500 earnest souls, pulled up at a long, gray building and met the broadly smiling man, who, through happenstance and force of character, has become cob pipe maker to the world.

It was nearly twenty years ago that O. Busch, a hardware dealer, Leslie Cole, an attorney, H. C. Vossbrink, a banker, and R. Schultze, a farmer, felt that Union should have a cob pipe factory, since their native Franklin County was the center of the nation's cob pipe production. Their choice for active leader of their baby enterprise was Charles P. Reinhard, retiring from long service as a general merchant because his hearing had failed. Mr. Reinhard had never been inside a cob pipe factory, although cob pipes had been manufactured in Franklin County since 1872. But Mr. Reinhard took the job.

From a standing start in 1907, Mr. Reinhard, as secretary and general manager of the National Cob Pipe Works, has built up a plant that manufactures and sells 50,000 cob pipes a day. It is one of the biggest factories in its highly specialized line, and ships its products to Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia, as well as both the Americas.

Nature ordained that the Franklin County, Missouri, soil and climate should produce the biggest corn-cobs in America. The industrious, painstaking descendants of the Germans who emigrated to Franklin County, from 1802 to 1852, have done the rest. Charley Reinhard, son of a store-keeping, land-holding father, has lived with cob pipes for nearly two decades. He knows whereof he speaks. Point to any one of the 250 varieties of cob pipes produced by his Union factory and he is off in a cloud—a luminous cloud—of cob pipe lore.

"This cob pipe business goes back to the aboriginal Indians," he admits. "The first owners of the North American continent learned to smoke tobacco, in stone, clay or metal pipes—the pipes of peace, and all of that. They also learned to raise Indian corn. But they never got to using corn-cob pipes. There was a reason. The reason was nubbins. With all due credit to our red-skinned friends, they never thought of seed selection. What they knew of eugenics did not extend to breeding corn. It takes a large corn-cob to make a practical cob pipe.

"Even that adventurous genius, Sir Walter Raleigh, who introduced tobacco smoking to an eager European civilization, never thought of corn-cob pipes. All corn-cobs were nubbins until Amreican farmers began to grow big-eared corn. Then the black and yellow hills and the overflowed bottom lands along the river named Missouri began to yield Boone White and other large cobbed corn. This was crossed with Indian corn—and Collier corn, cob pipe corn, resulted.

The Inventor of the Corn Cob

"ABOUT that time, in the early 'seventies, one Henry Tibbe, a Dutch scissors grinder and spinning wheel maker at Washington, in the northern part of our county, used his grinding lathe to bore the pith from a few large corn-cobs. Into these cobs he inserted some hollow weed stems, or occasionally bits of cane. He smoked these first corn-cob pipes. But they were too porous. So he went to his friend, Ludwig Muench, a Washington chemist, for putty. Muench suggesting using plaster-of-Paris. The plaster of Paris turned the trick.

"Henry Tibbe exhibited his pipes at the Franklin County Fair in 1874. Then he patented his corn-cob pipes, and his son, Anton A. Tibbe, who later became a judge in Franklin County, landed an order for 6,000 pipes in St. Louis. In 1878 the young concern graduated from foot-power lathes to engines. This raised its daily output from 500 to 1,000 pipes. The infant industry was on its way. Franklin County has been the world's center of cob pipe production ever since that time."

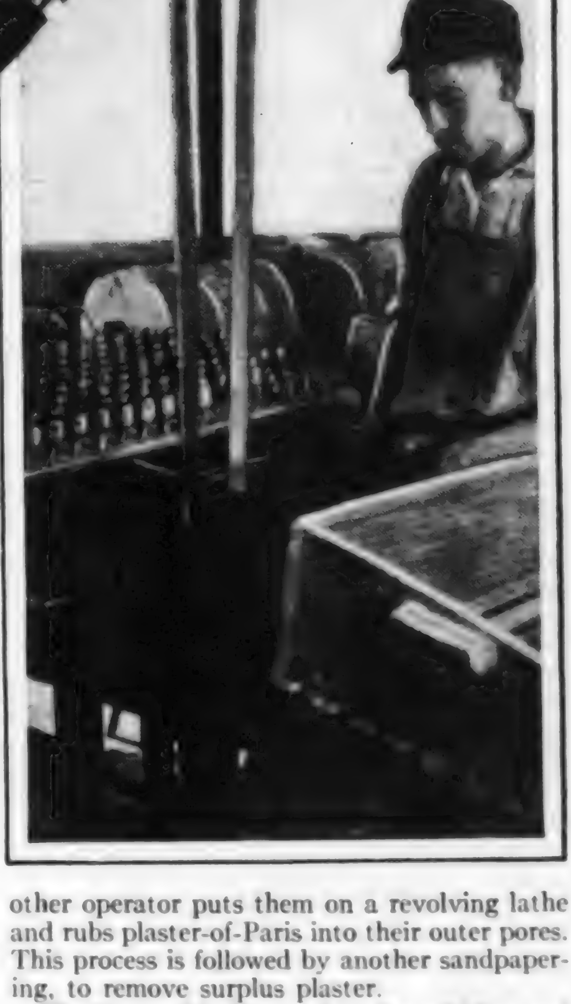
It means something to be the center of the world's cob pipe production. Franklin County, on the southern bank of the muddy Missouri River, about fifty miles west of St. Louis, produces about 30,000,000 cob pipes each year, or 100,000 a day, 12,500 an hour or 208 a minute. To reach this grand total of production about 15,000,000 cobs are rescued from the waste heaps or kitchen fires of Franklin County farms. What would be a total loss is turned into about $250,000 cash, which goes into the farmers' tills. Some of the cobs come from other Missouri counties, but most of the cob pipes upon which Gloucester fishermen, Pennsylvania coal miners, Pacific Coast railroad men, Michigan automobile makers, Birmingham steel workers, Australian sheep herders, Kaffir diamond diggers, or Dutch bulb growers puff in vast content are grown in Franklin County, home of the cob pipes of commerce.

A corn-cob to be interesting to the cob pipe maker must have a minimum diameter of one and three-quarter inches, and be very hard. Such a cob can be produced only in a long growing season, preferably 120 days. This long season must be supplemented by a strong soil, and a peculiarly strong soil at that. Few corn-cobs from Illinois or Iowa can qualify in size, or hardness. With a few exceptions only the soil and climate of those counties adjoining the Missouri River in central Missouri produce corn-cobs of required specifications. Either red or white cobs are acceptable, but the kernels must be white, although the farmer shells his cobs before he delivers them to the pipe-maker, so the kernels never reach the factory.

"Most of our cobs," says Charley Reinhard, "come from fields sown to seed furnished by us. We get that seed after years of selection. Corn is sorted, the largest ears kept and sown. From that seeding other large ears are selected. This selected corn is again sown. The corn from this seeding is culled. The largest ears are shelled. That selected seed goes to the farmers with whom we contract for cobs. The farmers keep the corn, which yields about fifty bushels an acre and sells at fifty cents a bushel, giving the farmer $25 an acre for his corn.

"But for his cobs he gets almost as much. We pay, under contract, about fifty cents a hundred for cobs. An acre yielding fifty bushels of corn will yield about 4,000 cobs. At fifty cents a hundred that makes $20 an acre for cobs—formerly a waste product. Some farmers maintain that Collier corn, the preferred kind for cob pipes, depletes the land. But at $20 an acre for cobs the farmer can afford to turn his corn land—worth from $50 to $100 an acre—into clover every two or three years and still show a most satisfactory profit. The cob pipe factory takes more losses on cobs than the farmer does."

Proving this assertion Charley Reinhard opens the doors of a warehouse half filled with a million or more mammoth corn-cobs. Then he opens the doors of another warehouse where there are thousands of cobs not so mammoth. "These small ones," he explains, "are the culls from our contracted cobs. We contract for about seventy-five carloads a year. These cobs come to us in sacks, about 400 sacks to the car and about 300 cobs to the sack, or about



About fifteen million corn-cobs are rescued each year from the waste heaps or kitchen fires of Missouri farms to be made into pipes. Only the largest and hardest are of any use to the pipe maker. The cobs that survive the preliminary processes are turned into shape by hand on a lathe.

120,000 to the car. Most of them arrive in the fall. They are seasoned for six months or so, then sorted. The culled cobs go into the factory fire. We take that loss. Then the hand and automatic saws cut the rest into pipe lengths, and take their toll."

It is appalling to the rank outsider the amount of abuse a humble corn-cob will stand without flying to pieces from sheer nervousness. The butt and point of each cob naturally falls into the factory waste-basket. That's another loss. But the pipe-length sections are conveyed, by belt or hand, to a sizer, operating on the principle of an orange sizer, so that each cylindrical length of cob falls into its allotted bin, from which it proceeds to a hand-operated boring-machine, where the pith is bored out. A few pieces fall by the wayside here—for some are not regular in shape, others are marked or scarred, still others have been split.

The good ones are then hand-turned, on rapidly revolving lathes, where skilled operators, armed with keen chisels made from files—because ordinary chisel steel is not tough enough to stand the wear and tear—turn the rough cob sections into smooth pipe bowls. Many a piece of cob cracks under this strain. The surviving sections suffer a little from the "tumbler," which frees them from cob dust and borings. They also sustain the subsequent sandpapering, which smoothes them before another operator puts them on a revolving lathe and rubs plaster-of-Paris into their outer pores. This process is followed by another sandpapering, to remove surplus plaster.

The thoroughly dizzy cobs, after whirling and tumbling from place to place about the factory, are now given a few moments of comparative quiet while a coat of shellac is allowed to dry on each polished bowl. But the end is far from

At least six distinct trades are drawn on in the making of the simplest ten-cent cob pipe, and as many as twenty-four operations may be performed on some of the fancier models. Ninety per cent. of the employees of the National Works own their own homes in Union, share the same social activities out of working hours, and constitute a happy family group in the factory.

reached. One begins to see why a good cob pipe is such a comforting companion in camp, studio, coal mine, or rough sea. It's glad to settle down to anything that suggests solace. For no sooner is the shellac dry than away the potential pipe bowl goes to be sandpapered again. No sooner has its shining morning face reached a high degree of polish than another trusty Missourite sandpapers both ends of the revolving bowl.

The thoroughly bored and badly badgered cob is now punctured for the future stem and labeled so all the world may know that it comes from Union, Missouri. Then it submits to shellacking of top and bottom and to another general polishing; catches its breath on drying-racks; receives a stem of reed, amber, rubber, or bone; is inspected with an eagle eye and then goes snugly into a carton, to find its way across the continents and the seven seas. And all this happens to a common or garden cob pipe.

If it is a pipe of more-than-ordinary class, with square cob stem, wooden bowl-plug or fancy shape, it endures some twenty-five other operations. Dark-finished pipes, for example, are burned and burnished by pine-sticks, held so firmly against the spinning-bowls as to give them their first taste of real hot smoke. And practically all of this work is done by hand.

A tiny "bubbler" pipe for which Hank Smithers of Sproggins Falls, Ohio, may grudgingly pay two cents of his hard-earned wage, must have a stem of cane from Tennessee or Arkansas or bamboo from far Japan. Each piece of slender cane is sawed in proper length, polished in a tumbling barrel, allowed to come up for air, then has its head sawed off square, and is "frazed" or tapered to fit into the pipe bowl.

Some of the larger pipes have hard maple stems. These stems are tapered, snout fashion, to give strength to the bottom of the bowl, though many smokers prefer to use the blunt-end stems which allow the tobacco juices to anoint the inner pith.

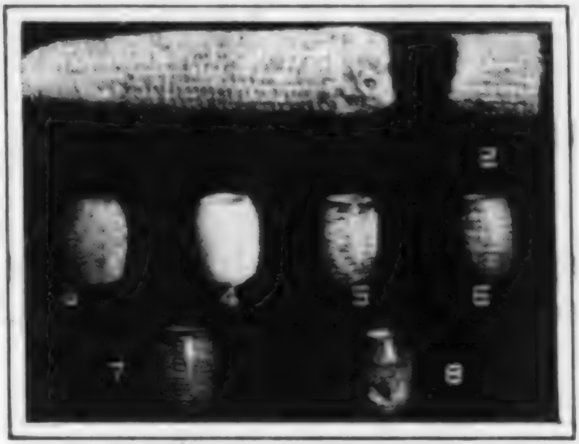
The fancier, more expensive pipes, for which the particular pay as much as fifty cents, require more elaborate stems and hence more attention. The stem for such a pipe may come from some Vermont sugar maple grove. This stem must be tumbled in paraffin and varnished in a hopper before its metal ferrule is stamped in place, and the bone mouthpiece is fastened to the end.

Specialism is the order of the day in fashioning the humble corn-cob pipe. Just as all but a few of the millions of cob pipes annually sold to smokers throughout the world originate in

Franklin County, Missouri, so do nearly all the wooden stems come from a little town called Croton, Vermont, where much hard maple goes through the mills; the metal ferrules from Waterbury, Connecticut, which has grown large in making little things, and the bone mouthpieces from Rockfall, Connecticut, where many other articles are made from bone. And by way of adding thickness to the plot, those same bone bits come only from the shin-bones of cows not less than two years old.

No matter how pulchritudinous the cow, her shin-bones will be rejected by the hard-hearted manufacturer until said cow can show, by birth certificate, that she has reached the requisite age. And after all is said and done in this fussy cob pipe world, the bone bits from the shin-bone of a cow are firmly clamped between what sister Louisa—who vehemently objects to my smoking—terms the jaw-bones of an ass. But, happily, there are millions of us mere men in this vale of tears who find surcease in puffing the lowly corn-cob pipe.

Then there are many addicts to the pipe of cob who yearn for stems of weichsel wood. Weichsel wood comes from Australia. It looks like cherry but has a real aroma, which cherry wood has not. So if you must smoke a long-stemmed pipe in natural unbarked wood—if you must have a smoke with the bark but not the bite, choose weichsel wood. It's English name is "Gean Wood," but very few people call it that.



After the cob has been sawed into pipe lengths (2) it is turned to shape (3); filled with plaster (4); sandpapered (5); shellacked and sanded (6); given a finishing coat (7); and bored for the stem (8).

These are but a few of the fundamentals Charley Reinhard had to learn when he broke blindly into the cob pipe game. Charley began by enlisting Gus Seim. Gus originated on a Missouri farm. When Gus had gained most of his six-feet-four he got a job in a cob pipe factory over at St. Charles. There he learned the mechanical wrinkles of the game. With Gus as his right bower Charley journeyed to distant machinery works, where he acquired the tools of his new trade which Gus installed. Then came the rub.

The National Cob Pipe Works had $6,500 paid up capital, a hopeful plant, and no business. Charley, fresh from a county store, went after orders. He called on his friend, Reiss, a wholesale pipe man in Chicago. Reiss gave him a $1,000 order, and instructions to fill that, and then report to him. Charley reported in due time. Reiss gave Charley a list of wholesalers in eastern cities. "Cut out the small fry. Go after big game," Reiss told the budding cob pipe man. Charley burnished up his full-sized smile and went. When he came back he had $20,000 worth of orders on his books. Business has been good.

As all the world of business knows, depending on a single special line of small sellers is a tight-rope game. The buying of raw stock must be done with rare acumen, and there must be enough of that on hand to fill all orders within the cancelation dates. Moreover, factory overhead must be persistently watched. An item retailing at from two to fifty cents must be manufactured carefully. Small profits and large production is the rule. Hence Charley is at his factory in rural Missouri at eight each morning, unless he's on the road. He rings in with the rest of the factory family, and family it is. Victor Reinhard, Charley's son, is at the office with his father, and Gus Seim, head machinist, addresses Victor as "Vic." Miss Meta Vitt, Charley's secretary, has been on that job since the inception of the National Cob Pipe Works, and when Mrs. Charley Reinhard calls at the factory it is a "Hello, Meta" and a "Hello, Kate." Miss Madeline Mudgett, stenographer, bobbed her blond hair years ago, one lap ahead of the girls in the labeling and packing rooms. Ninety per cent. of the men and women in the busy little factory own their homes in Union, or live with their folks in Union, city of their birth.

During the World War the factory bought war saving stamps for all its employees, and all hands joined in the flag-raising at the proper patriotic hour. Charley Reinhard, Sr., the second of his line, is now breaking in Charley, Jr., on the road.

Next to his dog, and, mayhap, his wife, normal man likes best his pipe. Long before Henry Tibbe bored his corn-cob pipes with his scissors-grinding lathe, countless Americans excavated myriads of cobs with trusty pocketknives. Old Daniel Boone made and smoked such pipes before he was laid to rest on Missouri soil, not far from where cob pipes now flourish as they've never flourished before. And from

[*Continued on page 136*]

Freida Was a Lady

by Courtney Ryley Cooper

How a long-suffering debutante elephant finally turned the tables on a surly rival

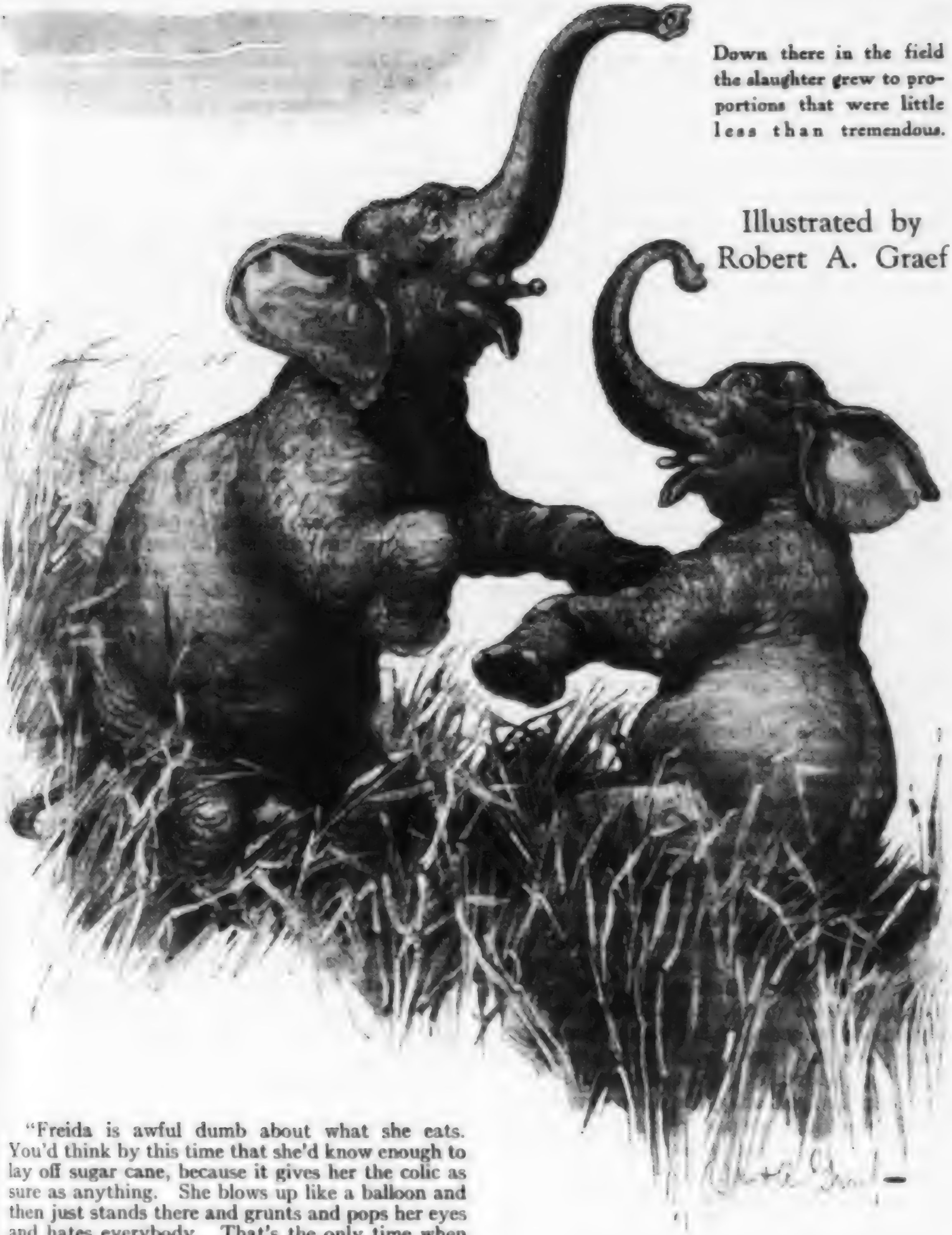
THERE was a great deal of commotion about Freida. All afternoon, the workmen and performers of the Botts Banner Shows had gathered before her picket-pin, where she loomed as the *pièce de résistance* of the Botts Banner menagerie; Freida, the entire seven tons of her, was going away.

The colic had caused it, although this wasn't generally known. Nor was it a matter of widespread publicity that while the circus dilated upon Freida's departure, a young, freckled man was, from a hiding place behind the upraised lid of his dressing trunk, telling the secret memoirs of that exodus in a letter meant for but one person.

"Dear Elsie," the missive ran, "I guess by this time that you know all about it. As soon as I found out from Mr. Botts, I sent a telegram to your father telling him that he had bought an elephant and that I was coming on the show with her.

"Now, Elsie, don't you ever breathe a word about this to anybody because if you do somebody will think that Freida is a bad bull which she ain't. You see, it was like this: your father was over here last week and told Mr. Botts that if he could get Freida to sort of lead the way, then it ought to be easy to train your Snyder to work with her, and that would make two bulls on your show which is the most that any wagon show has. Besides that, Snyder never would be any good without Freida because he is too old to train by himself, like I told you. An elephant that has been a working bull all his life don't know what it is all about when he is put in a ring to perform unless another bull is there to show him how to do it. So when your father said this, it let the cats out of the bag and Mr. Botts put the price way up and says he wanted twelve thousand for her. Well, I nudged your father and he offered nine thousand dollars which was 'way over a good price for Freida, but Botts wouldn't take it because he thought he was going to be able to squeeze out that extra money.

"Well, I sure felt bad about that, because you know how I feel that if Freida could come over there and get Snyder started so's he could do something besides just push wagons around the lot and I could do the training and you just do the flashy stuff in the ring when the elephants were working it'd make a big hit and you'd get a wonderful hand at every performance besides making money for the show, and then you wouldn't have to leave the circus. But about Freida, and the sugar cane which is what did the trick.



Down there in the field the slaughter grew to proportions that were little less than tremendous.

Illustrated by Robert A. Graef

"Freida is awful dumb about what she eats. You'd think by this time that she'd know enough to lay off sugar cane, because it gives her the colic as sure as anything. She blows up like a balloon and then just stands there and grunts and pops her eyes and hates everybody. That's the only time when Freida ain't as gentle as a kitten and I've always kept sugar cane away from her, but when I saw that Mr. Botts was trying to gyp your father and not let me and Freida come over to your show and everything, I didn't see any need of me standing guard over a dumbbell elephant that didn't know any more than to eat something that don't agree with her stomach, so when a couple of fellows came along yesterday with their arms full of sugar cane like they do in these southern cities and began poking it at Freida, I just happened to look the other way. And of course Freida the old boob she ate all of it and began to swell until if you'd of stuck a pin in her, she'd of whistled like a popcorn wagon. Then when I seen her eyes was beginning to pop, I ran 'em away and just let nature take its course. Naturally, I didn't know the first person that was going to come along was the Chief of Police, but it was and he'd been bawling out Mr. Botts for letting more people in the tent than there was seats for, and Mr. Botts had just kissed him out of that and they was chatting along quite genial when Mr. Botts stopped to show him Freida and the Chief of Police tried to pet her and Frieda hauled off and knocked him for a row of brick schoolhouses and when he got up he went and pinched Mr. Botts for harboring vicious animals and that's how it come that Mr. Botts had me wire your father to come and take the elephant. But of course that won't be necessary as I will bring her myself, seeing that I go with her.

"Now don't tell that to a soul about the sugar cane and Freida's colic because I won't let her have any on the show and it might prejudice your father against her which wouldn't be right, as Freida naturally acts the lady, and besides I just let them do that to save your father three thousand dollars that he was being gyped out of. I will start out with Freida tomorrow like your father's telegram said and I will be on the show by Wednesday sure. Then you'll see! I may not know all there is to know about elephants, but I know ole Freida and when you see her you'll agree with me that she sure is some bull. See you Wednesday, Elsie.

"Yours affectionately,
"CHARLIE MACE."

FIVE days later, there was more commotion about Freida. This time, however, it came from the assembled personnel of the Harris World-Beater Wagon Shows as it gathered in front of the big top to watch the arrival of a very earnest young man, dusty and footsore from seventy miles of cross-country travel, followed by an equally dusty and somewhat disturbed Freida. What it had been all about, she did not know. To be yanked suddenly from the peace of her picket in the Banner Shows menagerie, dragged forth into the night in an opposite direction from the wagons and horses and tents of what had always been her home, had disturbed her not a little.

In the first place, she wasn't at all interested in being the hidden motive in a love plot. Freida's hefty heart was concerned solely with being comfortable and happy—a very natural condition with the Botts Banner Shows, where she had been the object of every attention, since she had constituted a great part of the show, and where, outside of the few times when colic had descended upon her with its ponderous misery, life had run upon a very even keel. There the sights about her had been ones rendered dear by familiarity, the same wagons, the same horses, the same people, the same sounds at night, calling to her as the little show made its way through the darkness to the next town, and Freida, being more gentle than brainy, had come to accept all this as a part of her life.

Then it had all changed, and the wagons had disappeared as well as everything else, except Charlie Mace, and about the only companionship he had given her during the rough, lonely journey from the dear old home, was to tell her to pick up her feet and keep coming, that there were plenty of miles left.

But now that the tents of the Harris World-Beater Shows loomed before her, Freida felt a little better. Not that she was entirely satisfied; her slow moving brain, while it recognized the fact that this looked like home, also managed to encompass the realization that there was something different about it all. So, as Charlie Mace hooked her gently by the ear to lead her into the circus grounds, where forms were popping from under the sidewalls to greet her, she slanted her head and, raising her trunk, trumpeted querulously. Then, suddenly she popped her beady eyes and stopped short. That trumpeting had been echoed, with a like note, though more profound. Charlie Mace turned and chuckled.

"That's your little playmate!" he announced. "Handin' you the keys to the city!"

It was all Greek to Freida. Hers had been a secluded life; as far as she was concerned, there weren't any more elephants. So, she refused obedience to the bull-hook and stood at the edge of the circus lot, sniffing the air with quick, nervous workings of the delicate "fingers" of her proboscis. In the distance, a brightly dressed girl, hastily patting her bobbed hair, came from the big-show entrance, glanced toward the elephant, then ran forward. Charlie Mace, his freckled face blooming with rushing color, forgot all other matters entirely.

"Hello, Elsie!" he beamed, and scraped a foot in the dust. Elsie Harris raised her shoulders and smiled. Then she halted in admiring survey.

"Oh, gee, Charlie!" she exclaimed, gazing up at the still-perturbed Freida, "ain't she wonderful?"

"Ain't she a beaut, now?" asked Charlie, turning also to survey his charge. "Just you wait 'till we get them two bulls together an' I start workin' my stuff on 'em. It'll make these other wagon shows sit up an' take notice."

Elsie giggled; Elsie had a right to giggle. In the first place, she was of the giggling age and the giggling kind. Besides, as she confessed to herself privately, Charlie Mace had such a way about him. He was lots sweller than most young fellows that a girl finds around a wagon show.

"Gee," she said, "I bet you'll make a swell act out of 'em, Charlie."

"I bet I will," agreed Mr. Mace. Then repeated: "Ain't she a beaut?"

"Um-humph! She's a lot bigger'n Snyder, ain't she?"

"Ought to be," Charlie told her. "She's got to be the leader, you know. Got to run Snyder. Now, just as I told you—"

"Oh, gee," interrupted Elsie Harris. "Here comes Papa."

Not only Papa, but the conglomerated population of the entire circus; clowns from the dressing tent; Old Breen, the attenuated head of the tiny menagerie; Bumps, the boss hostler and all the rest, with Papa Harris slightly in the lead. As was natural with a great event of this kind, they halted at a respectful distance, merely talking in low voices among themselves, while Papa Harris, owner and general manager of the Great Harris World-Beater One Ring Circus, strode forward and made his inspection.

"Got her here all right," he announced at last.

Charlie Mace agreed that he had done that very thing.

"Ain't she a beaut?" he asked proudly. Papa Harris twirled a better curl into his drooping mustache, then fingered the lion's claw which hung from his heavily-linked watch-chain.

"Ought to be for nine thousand plunks," he agreed, with the concealed pride of a wagon show owner big enough to possess two elephants. "Didn't have no trouble gettin' here?"

"Who? Me? Oh, no. Of course," Charlie Mace admitted, "she didn't want to come very much that first night, after she seen we were cutting away from the show. But then, knowin' elephants like I do, everything went fine."

PAPA HARRIS beamed; evidently the steady recommendations of his daughter had not gone for naught.

"That's good," he said. Then as the circus people gathered about the distressed Freida to give her a closer inspection: "Well, I don't guess there's any time like the present, is there? Might as well lead 'er in there and get 'em acquainted while I'm downtown." He started away, but with an afterthought, beckoned Charlie Mace aside. "You'd better start takin' Elsie in hand as soon as you can," he commanded, "I'd like to see this thing get to going pretty quick."

Charlie Mace nodded professionally.

"Now, that's just what I'd like to do, Mr. Harris. I want to see her get something with the circus that she likes—"

"There's one or two other reasons," confessed Papa Harris, then without going into further details, moved away, twirling his mustache. Charlie Mace raised his bullhook and caught it in Freida's ear.

"Gangway," he called, and the crowd fell aside. "C'mon, Freida."

The parade started, Charlie and Elsie leading the way, Freida lumbering along behind them. There had come no further sound from the menagerie, and the brief respite which the elephant had industriously occupied in sniffings, had somewhat reassured her. Here were the same smells which she had known at home—hay, and the menagerie scents, and the perfume from the horse-tents. The wagons, in spite of a different coloration from those she had known in the past, had in a way familiarized themselves, and it was with a shimmy of joy that Freida obeyed the command. A tent meant home, and surcease from the lonely wandering of country roads, with shadows all about one, and only a keeper to furnish company. Freida was a great girl for associations; loneliness affects an elephant quickly, more quickly, in fact, than any other animal except the chimpanzee.

But now all that apparently was over. Quite cheerily she accompanied the pair which led her forward, nor mattered it to her that she was present in bulk solely, as Elsie Harris chattered volubly to Charlie Mace and Charlie Mace replied with an equal amount of loquacity. Sufficient unto Freida that she had reached a haven, and her steps grew staccato with animation as the onlookers raised the sidewalling of the menagerie tent for her entrance. She chirruped. She shook her head, freeing her ear from the commanding point of the bullhook. She trumpeted her joy and trotted within—only to bring up short with pop-eyed consternation.

Ten feet away was a hulky thing that Freida had never seen before. A weaving affair, of huge legs and waving trunk, which chirruped even as she had chirruped, and now was straining at his picket-pin as he moved forth his proboscis upon a quick tour of investigation. Snyder, work elephant of the Harris World-Beater Shows was as much surprised by events as was Freida.

Each was in the same condition of wonderment. Each knew instinctively that the other animal was of the same general characteristics as itself—and therein lay the surprise of it. Elephants are not numerous affairs on small wagon shows; once an animal has left its babyhood home in the great animal markets of Germany, and then been the solitary pachyderm of a little circus for some twenty years, it rather forgets what one of its kind looks like. Especially when the habit of holding up mirrors so that elephants can get a glimpse of themselves is hardly to be expected of animal trainers.

So, for a time, they merely stood and stared, Freida the fulsome, and Snyder the squat, each poking out its trunk and uttering queer sounds of a conjecturing nature, or blasting forth its breath with quick gusts that raised the dust eddies and caused the onlooker to move to a place from which flight would be easier. But Charlie Mace, holding the frightened Elsie close to him, refused to be disheartened.

"Just you wait," he said. "They'll make up with each other in a minute."

The minute passed, and more minutes followed. At his picket-pin, Snyder trumpeted anew, and began to plunge, as though about to surge forth upon a tour of destruction. Freida evidently judged the action correctly, for she turned and made motion as though heavily desirous of leaving the tent. This was quite clearly no place for a lonely lady. Charlie held her back.

"Don't you let him bother you, Freida!" he urged. "Ole Snyder, he's all right. He just ain't used to you. Now, go on an' make up."

So saying, he prodded her forward, while Freida raised her ears and swished her diminutive tail. At last she obeyed, moving slowly at first, then, once her mind was set upon it, with more of energy and zeal, as though, at last, there had penetrated her heavy skull the fact that Snyder was an elephant the same as she, and that perhaps, after all, this little meeting was something to be happy about. Finally she wiggled, from trunk to tail. She grunted and chirruped with a tremendous surge of relief, now that her doubts were settled, and with the utmost amiability, moved toward her waiting boy chum to exchange greetings.

IT WAS a poor decision. In the first place, this was Snyder's own domain and he never before had been put in the position of an elephantine host. Besides that, Snyder wasn't lonely, Snyder wasn't away from home, Snyder wasn't looking for company and Snyder wasn't feeling too well anyway, since he'd been working since sun-up. So, he waited until the gleeful Freida had moved within walloping distance, and then, all in an instant he lowered his heavy head and with a charging motion that pulled his picket-pin from the ground, caught the astonished Freida in the midriff and knocked her, gasping and dazed, into a sitting position some ten feet away. The menagerie, from monkeys to cat animals, howled its excitement. Freida blasted the air with wild trumpeting and Snyder did the same. Charlie Mace, his freckles showing strangely yellow against sudden white, ran hurriedly from the side of Elsie and swiped at the work elephant with his bullhook.

"Get back there you!" he commanded, driving the infuriated denizen of the Harris menagerie back to his picket-pin. "And you, Freida—no foolishness now!"

The command wasn't needed. Freida still sat, seven tons of astonished sorrow. As though she had been insulted and knew it, yet didn't have the heart to resent the fact. A supreme butting where it hurt most had done its work. The momentary *sang froid* of her demeanor had vanished. Now she was thoroughly crushed, and, pachydermic dignity gone to the winds, she merely sat there, hind legs spraddled awkwardly, eyes rolled until they were more white than iris, trunk upraised at a dolorous angle—sat and squawked until Charlie Mace poked her with the bullhook and told her to shut up. After that, blasting her private thoughts, Freida scrambled slowly to her feet and waited in dolorous fashion until Charlie Mace had driven a new stake for Snyder and one for herself, at a safe distance. Whereupon she submitted to chaining, and then, trunk limp, eyes glazed and lifeless, she stood, a lady in distress, while Snyder, as ungentlemanly as ever, weaved at his picket-pin and rolled his piggy eyes in challenge to the interloper to come on and get walloped again. Charlie Mace broke a bale of hay and threw it proudly before his pet.

"Didn't I tell you she was a real bull?" he asked triumphantly. "See how she didn't fight him? Huh? Freida ain't that kind—no mean stuff in her. She's a good girl, ain't you Freida?" and he patted the lifeless trunk. "A perfect lady, no matter where you put her!"

"Maybe Snyder hurt her!" said the girl, protruding herself from a hasty protection behind the lion cage. Charlie Mace sneered.

"Who, him? Say, Freida could lick him the best day he ever lived. Look at her—she weighs a ton more'n he does. If she'd ever light into him—but she ain't built that way. Freida's a gentle bull, and she'll have this guy gentle the same way she is. That's Freida's way. Now all you guys—" he waved an arm toward various persons, emerging from positions of safety, or again edging under the sidewall, "clear out and let these two bulls get acquainted. Get 'em excited, and the first thing we know, there'll be a fight. I guess that means us too," he said as he moved to the side of the girl, surveying the two animals over his shoulder, "we'll just leave 'em alone. Ole Snyder there, he's calmed down a lot. Pretty soon they'll be thicker'n fleas."

Whereupon, as an obedient show population moved onward to its various tasks, thus clearing the menagerie, Charlie Mace took Elsie Harris by the arm and leading the way, at last came to a halt by the stake and chain wagon, outside the tent. The tumult of the various caged animals had quieted now; once the excitement of two fighting elephants had lapsed, the advent of Freida, as far as they were concerned, had become a closed incident. Not so for the lady herself. She still stood disconsolate, the end of her trunk dragging dolorously in the dust, its wave no longer a permanent affair. Her ears drooped too, and her shoulders slouched. There were wrinkles about her mouth and a baggy looseness under her eyes; Freida's attitude was very much indeed like that of a fat woman who has just received bad news. While from near by, Snyder still fussed and grabbed hay-dust from the ground and blew it in clouds about him and otherwise indicated that he wasn't at all satisfied with his neighbor. But to the pair out by the stake and chain wagon, these things were not apparent. There was no more trumpeting, no outburst of battle, and the silence spoke of peace.

"I sure was awful glad to see the way Freida acted," said Charlie Mace boyishly as he raised himself to the wagon tongue, and helped the girl to a position beside him. "I didn't want to say anything, but I'd been awful worried about that. Because if Freida started anything, then that would've gummed the cards right. Snyder mightn't have gotten over it, seeing that this is his home and everything. But this way, it's fine."

Elsie Harris twisted her fingers, one hand into the other, her usual buoyancy gone.

"Oh gee, Charlie," she said, "I'm awful glad. I don't want to leave the circus."

"I don't want you to," he agreed heartily. "I should say I don't, Elsie. I want you to be a star."

The girl laughed.

"Oh, I don't care so much whether I'm that or not. But, gee, I'd like to be something. You know—amount to something around here. I ain't ever been able to yet, just take tickets. Papa gets awful mad at me."

Charlie Mace straightened.

"He ain't mean to you?"

"Oh, I don't mean that way, Charlie. Papa's awful good. But his heart's all wrapped up in this circus—it's all he's ever known. And I didn't used to like it."

"Didn't you used to?" asked Charlie Mace seriously. The girl shook her head.

"No, I never did like it, 'till I seen you, Charlie."

"Oh gee!"

"THEN all of a sudden I did—you know, like it. I've been a kind of a crazy kid, I guess."

"How so?" asked Charlie Mace in a tone which indicated the utter impossibility of such a thing. Elsie Harris twisted her hands again.

"Oh, I don't know; just every way, I guess. Mama always made such a fuss over me, and wouldn't let Papa train me for a horse act or anything like that when I was young enough because she was afraid I'd get hurt, and I guess that sort of made me think I was just too cute for anything. Oh, it wasn't Mama's fault," she added hastily. "It was just me—everybody around the show babied me, because I was the boss's kid. So I just grew up awful spoiled, and thought I was so pretty and everything, and didn't think the circus was good enough for me. I wanted to go in the movies, and that just made Papa awful mad."

"I bet you'd be good in the movies," said Charlie Mace admiringly. The sunlight of late afternoon was filtering through Elsie's yellow hair; it looked exactly like light-colored gold, thought Charlie. The girl forced a giggle.

"I don't want to go in the movies any more," came finally. "They had a contest in the *Movie Fan Magazine* and I sent in my picture. Papa got awful mad and told me I was a little fool and I got mad at him for saying it, and we had an awful time. Then—" Elsie confessed it in a trailing voice—"I didn't win anything."

"Them things are all fixed anyway," scoffed Charlie.

"Oh well, I don't want to go any more." Elsie regarded her companion shyly. "Right after that movie thing, Mama got sick and—well, you know. That left Papa awful lonely and I was kind of glad I hadn't won in the movies. So I thought I'd stay awhile until I could learn to be a stenographer and then go away and work somewhere, because I just knew Papa was always thinking how much better it would have been if I could have learned something when I was a kid. You can't be an equestrienne or anything like that unless you start young, and I wasn't any good for anything except taking tickets, and anybody can do that."

"Not like you do!" said Charlie.

"Well, it ain't much fun anyway." Elsie swung her feet and clasped her hands. "So I was just studying like everything, and just hoping for the time when I could get away and go to the city, and that's when you came over to the show that time and spent a week helping Old Breen, and you got to talking to me about how you could fix up an act where I could be in the ring with the elephants. I just got awful excited about that."

Charlie Mace straightened.

"That ain't all," he said. "Just you wait until we get those two bulls to going good. It won't take any time at all now, either. Of course, Snyder, he's got a lot to learn, since he ain't ever been a performin' elephant, but that'll come—from him watching Freida. Then you'll see how it'll turn out—you there in the ring, making all the motions—"

"And dressed up in a Roman costume," said Elsie excitedly.

"That'd be swell," agreed Charlie. "With gold braid on it an' everything."

"And one of those bands around my head."

"You don't tell 'em no different. It'll be swell. You'll stand out in front an' give all the commands, an' get up on Freida's leg when she raises it—you hold on to a strap from her head, you know—an' everything like that. While the audience don't see me, hardly at all, hidden like I am behind the bulls, givin' them their commands with the bullhook; they just think I'm a sort of a helper. Oh, it'll be swell."

Then he looked up at the sound of steps. Papa Harris was approaching, pulling rather thoughtfully at his trailing mustache.

"That bull of yours don't act over-happy," he said. Charlie Mace shook his head cockily.

"Just you wait till they get acquainted," he boasted. "Just you wait until tomorrow."

But on the morrow, when Charlie Mace, with Elsie and Papa Harris in his wake, invaded the menagerie tent for the beginning of training, it was with a slight feeling of misgiving. Things didn't look so cheerful—especially Freida.

She was a poor, lonely girl was Freida, with an expression in her eyes like one who had seen better days. This place, as a new abode, was anything but what she might have expected, while, as a host, her boy-chum, Mr. Snyder, had turned out to be a first-class roughneck.

Only once during the whole night had Freida found anything resembling peace; that had been when the show had torn down and, its shadowy wagons rumbling through the stillness of the countryside, had moved along the dusty roads to the next town, there, in the moonlight, to set up a temporary shelter for the menagerie and turn in to sleep. Then the respite had ended; Freida and Snyder had been put side by side again, to Snyder's disgust and a lonely lady's misery.

THIS time the stakes had been driven nearer to each other and the closer association seemed only to have whetted Snyder's spirit of incivility. In the long hours which had followed, he had stolen her hay, reached unceremoniously into her water barrel, and, filling his trunk with the cold liquid, sprayed it in chilling blasts upon a shivering, bulbous object of misery who longed for nothing but peace, and following that, occupied his time by blasting uncomplimentary remarks. More than that, when Freida, in a restless moment, had moved to the end of her chain and slaunched herself about into a vulnerable position, Mr. Synder had rolled his eyes in the graying dawn, raised a hind foot and swung it about in a tremendous kick which had caught Freida with a force which had left no doubt as to the disposition of the gentleman into whose life she had been so unwittingly cast. No lady, elephant or otherwise, likes to be kicked. It had taken the last atom of resistance from Freida; after that, she had wilted like a seven-ton violet; this being a considerable wilt.

Charlie Mace strove not to notice her dejection. He prated gaily of what was about to be, and remarked again upon Freida's gentility. After that, disdaining entirely the fact that Snyder was wiggling his eyes and curling his trunk in a manner wholly disagreeable, he led the way into the big top ring, which had just been finished, and stationed his two spectators at one side.

"Now, we'll just start easy with 'em," he said. "Just get 'em into the habit of goin' around the ring together. You see," he explained, as Freida settled in a lump and Snyder occupied his idle moments by blowing dust clouds at her, "I've been sort of preparing her for this. I've got her so she knows just what to do. All right now, Snyder," he commanded, edging the first elephant to the ring bank, "you stand right there, 'till I give you the signal to start. Now, Freida, ole girl, tails!"

He touched her with the bull-hook and she moved a step forward, suddenly to chirrup and halt. Charlie Mace poked her again.

"C'mon, ole girl! Tails! C'mon, you know what 'tails' means!"

That was just the trouble—Freida knew only too well. She also knew that when she reached forward with her trunk to grasp the caudal appendage of her unwilling companion, thus establishing herself upon a personal basis, that Snyder would assert himself. Freida had been walloped. Freida had been butted. Freida had been kicked where the kicking hurt worse. Enough was enough.

So she merely stood and let her trunk drag while Snyder reached outside the ring and gathered in what grass grew there and Charlie Mace became emphatic. At last spurred by a remark from Papa Harris, the elephant trainer seized Freida by the trunk, yanked her into position and then curled that trunk about the tail of the other elephant. After that he jumped. Snyder had bellowed with rage, whirled viciously and slapped the innocent elephant behind him, full in the face. When they caught Freida, at last, she was behind the cookhouse, draped with half the big-top sidewalling which she had taken with her on the way out, and the seat of a wagon hooked gracefully over one ear where it had landed in the turning over of the vehicle proper. Charlie Mace wiped nervously at his perspiring forehead.

"I guess maybe he'd just better leave 'em together awhile," he said, to Elsie, coming timidly into speaking distance, "any animal's got to have a chance to get acquainted. Where's your father—I'll tell him we won't try 'em out again for a few days—"

"He's gone over to the blacksmith shop to see how much it's going to cost to fix that wagon," she exclaimed. "Oh, Charlie, Papa's awful mad."

"I won't bother him right now." Again a hand wiped at that perspiring forehead. "But don't you worry, Elsie. Everything's going to be all right."

"Oh, I don't know, Charlie. I get awful afraid of 'em when they fight like that."

"What?" he stared at her. "With me around?"

"But you were over under the seats," said Elsie innocently. Charlie Mace didn't answer that remark. He merely took Freida by the ear and by pushing and pulling and cajoling, got her back to her picket-pin beside Snyder in the menagerie. Then, he seated himself, and made cryptic marks in the dust with his bullhook.

It wasn't the last time. As Charlie had hinted in his letter, he didn't know all there was to know about elephants. A great mark of that lack of education being what to do when a selfish elephant sees another elephant enter his sphere—and, like a dog in his own back yard, objects to the intrusion.

"You ole fool!" he exclaimed to Freida after a second attempt had ended greatly like the first, "if you had any spunk to you, you'd up and knock him into the middle of next week. You're bigger'n he is, ain't you?" he asked the mournful pachyderm. "You ought to be able to pick him up and twist him into knots—just one session of that an' he'd eat out of your hand. But what do you do? Huh? What do you do?—you stand there like a wet dish-rag and take his rough stuff without hittin' back once! You make me sick."

The argument accomplished nothing. In the first place, all that Freida got out of it was that her one friend in the world was scolding her in a tone which couldn't be mistaken. So she merely allowed her face to become more flabbily resistless, her knees to bow and her trunk to drag farther in the dust. From his position near by Snyder reached over and stole the hay which Charlie Mace had just put out for her, champing upon it with great wavings of his trunk, as though stolen food were a great delicacy. And Freida, as usual, let him do it, while Charlie Mace again made uncomplimentary remarks and moved from the menagerie.

A LITTLE of Freida's mannerism had begun to reflect itself in him. The cocky swing of confidence which he had brought to the Harris World-Beater Shows had largely departed, as well as his cheery greetings and his general chipper demeanor. Charlie had been the recipient of a few remarks, from such persons as Bumps and Old Breen, about upstarts who thought they could handle elephants. More than that, Charlie Mace had made a few remarks to himself, far more uncomplimentary than anything he had heard. Then he had swallowed his pride, and brought up the matter casually with Old Breen, asking him in an off-hand manner if he had ever run into a condition such as this. And Breen, having been deposed to make room for the new elephant-trainer, had told him to go jump in the lake. But that hadn't been the final blow. It had come from Elsie.

Not that she had said a word. It had been what she hadn't said, and how she hadn't looked, and what she hadn't done—on the last trial, she had managed, without particularly drawing attention to the fact, to watch the vain attempts at elephant amelioration from the safe perspective of the menagerie tent. Charlie had guessed as easily what that meant as he had divined that Papa Harris was not especially pleased when he had asked Charlie whether Mr. Botts Banner Shows had ever been in an asylum. But Charlie had striven to overlook it.

Just as he was now striving to overlook an even greater matter as he came from the menagerie tent and observed Elsie Harris, bent over a book in the shade of the stake and chain wagon. She had a pencil in her hand, and a narrow tablet, ruled with pale pink lines, upon which, with much biting of her tongue and screwing up of her countenance, she was making innumerable lines of strange characters, with pothooks and dashes and twists and curlicues. He strove mightily in fact—but failed.

"What're you doing?" he asked, coming from behind her. She closed the book hastily.

"Oh, nothing," said Elsie Harris, and Charlie Mace went back to the elephant line. He yanked savagely at Freida. He poked with as much viciousness at the surly Snyder as he sent them anew to the ring.

"You two are going to start workin' together or I'll know the reason why!" he barked. "Now, get in there, both of you, and I'll bust the daylight out of the one that tries to fool with me!"

He meant it—but he didn't carry it out. Because, at the first outburst from Snyder, Freida did the customary thing, striking the reserved seat stands in her flight and piling them into a mess which the workmen did not succeed in untangling until long after the usual opening time. When, at last, the crowd did enter, a very disconsolate Charlie Mace sat before the equally disconsolate Freida. He had just come from a session with Papa Harris, in which the show owner had acclaimed a championship. It had gone to Charlie Mace as the world's worst elephant trainer. Nor had Elsie aided him more than to stand in the offing and cry. Viciously his bullhook scraped the earth; as viciously Charlie Mace resented the rank injustice.

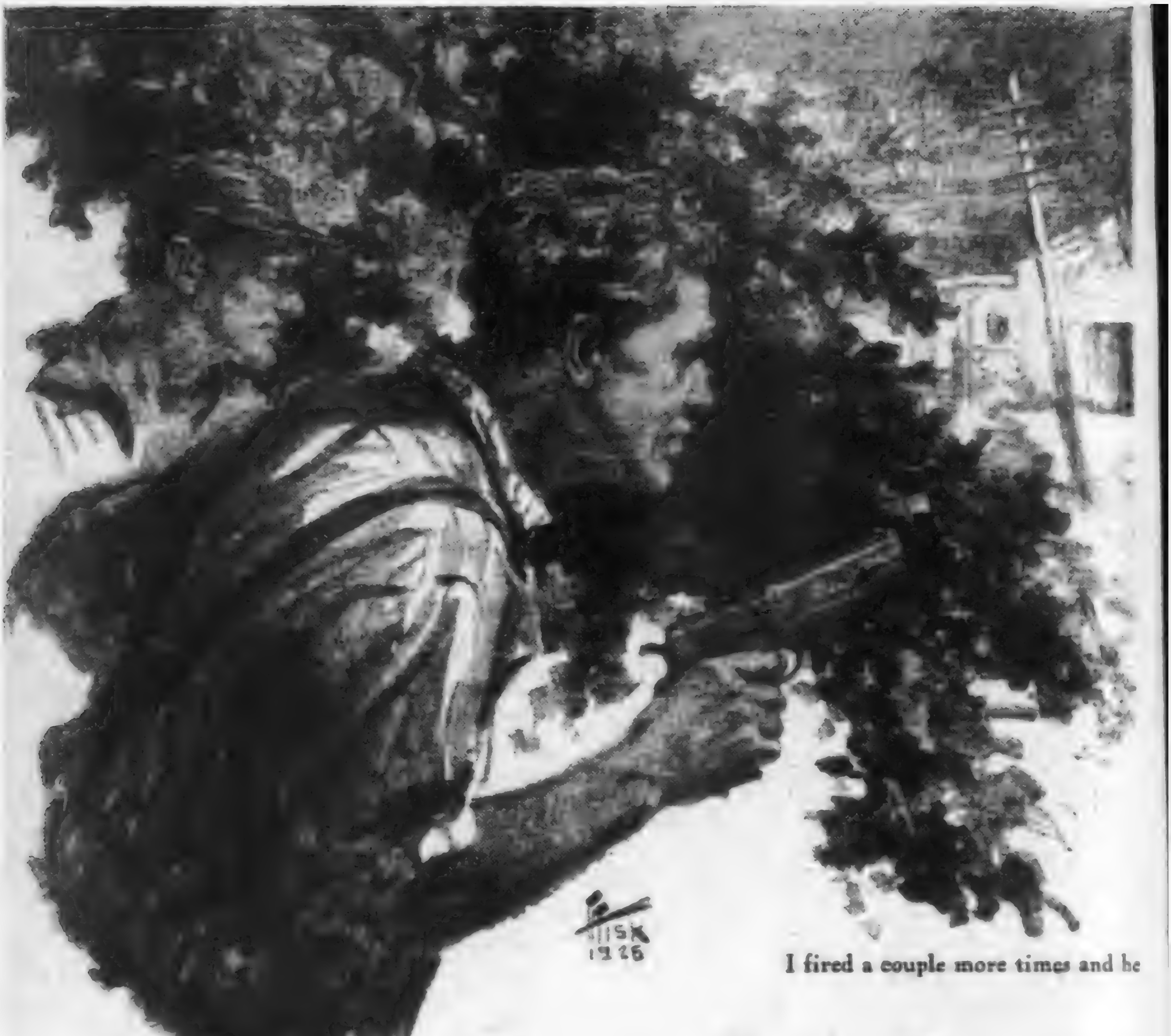
"As if it was my fault!" he seethed, "that a fool elephant's got to get the jimmies and be afraid of its shadow. How'd I know she was going to . . ." Then he looked up. "Hey, Buddy," he said hurriedly, "don't feed any of that stuff to this elephant."

"Don't she like sugar-cane?" asked the young man, who, one arm loaded with the succulent plant, had poked a stalk toward Freida, thus provoking the first evidence of interest since the distressed elephant had landed in her new home. Charlie waved him away.

"That's the trouble. She likes it too well. It don't agree with her. Give it to that bull over there—I don't care how sick he gets."

Whereupon a new grief entered the life of Freida. A poignant grief—for this was the first of a belt of sugar-cane towns, and in the south where the sugar-cane grows, it's quite the thing to take an armful to the circus to feed to the elephants. Thus the cup of sorrow brimmed; in vain did Freida bravely summon herself out of her doldrums with the sight of every approaching form. In vain did she poke forth her trunk in pitiful begging. In vain did she chirrup and roll her eyes. Charlie was always there, to wave the offerings aside—while Snyder, taking all comers, champed and chewed and threw his trunk in the air, lifting first one foot then the other in his ecstatic delight, while his eyes rolled and the sugar-cane juice ran

(*Continued on page 138*)



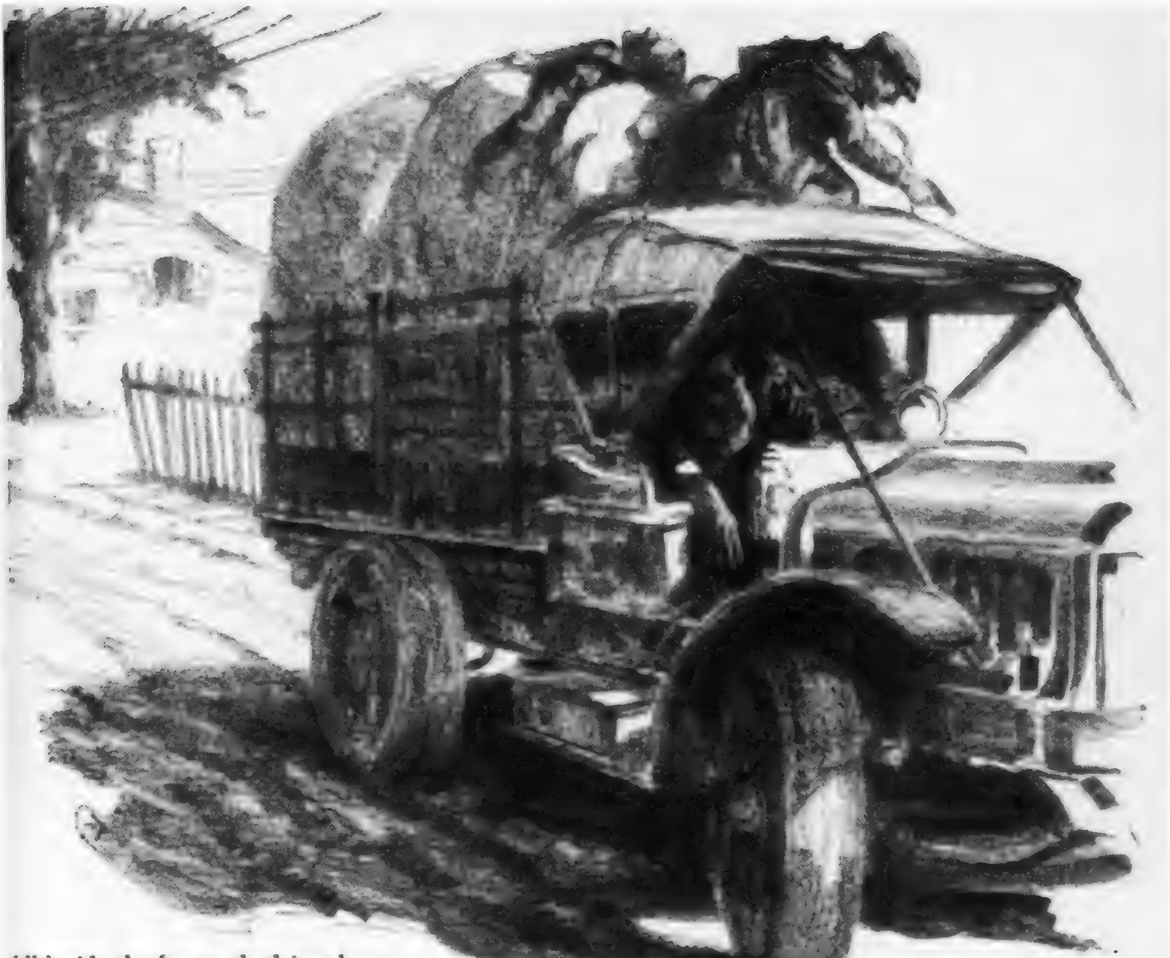
I fired a couple more times and he

Sandy Burr

A story of present

I REMEMBER best my mother's shining red hair. She ran away when I was twelve years old and my father died a little while afterward. Then my Uncle Fred came and took me home to live with him and Aunt Ella in Carversville, Indiana. He was president of the baseball club there and gave me a job selling programs during the summer vacations. But I had always liked playing ball—somehow it all came naturally to me—and in a little while the men let me throw to them in batting practice. Rube Walling was pitching for the team then, and George Nelson was covering first base. All the time, though, I kept wondering what had become of my mother. I asked Uncle Fred once. "Don't you know?" he said gruffly. I replied that I didn't. "Then the best thing for you is not to ask." I never spoke to him about her again, but some day I meant to find her.

When I was seventeen George Nelson put me in as shortstop, and I made out pretty well until the fourth season, when I broke my leg sliding to bases. About that time, though, while I was laid up, a man named Ben Green began coming to the house. He was with the Beals & Bundy Circus and somehow seemed to know all about my folks. I was thinking all the time that I'd have to travel around if I ever hoped to find my mother. Without telling Ben Green what I planned, I asked him if he could get me a job with the circus. Later, after my leg was well again, he got me a job driving Mr. Bundy's car. I made some mighty good friends with the outfit: Buffalo Gray was publicity man and Shavings Wilson



fell beside the front wheel in a heap.

By
Samuel Merwin

Illustrated by
Harry Fisk

day American youth

was one of the most famous clowns in the country. It wasn't long, though, before I found out what Ben Green did for a living: he was a thief. I learned some things about Mr. Bundy, too, but I knew enough to keep my mouth shut. I did some thinking, just the same.

This month's instalment

IN A few days my life settled down into a routine. I washed the car 'most every morning, in one garage or another, and brushed it outside, and tinkered around the motor. It was only now and then that I had to drive at night. The boss was pretty busy. And he had to mix around a lot, with politicians entertaining him in the different cities and things like that. He surely was a force, that man. Almost always he was good humored enough. Half the time, if you didn't know him pretty well, you'd hardly have thought he was working. But I soon learned that all the problems of the business went straight up to him and he decided every one of them in about half a minute, always in that easy, offhand way but with plenty of snap behind it. Buffalo always said he was the best showman since Barnum. He had some of that old bird's tricks, at that. He could get up on his feet in front of a Rotary Club or a Kiwanis Club and give them a first-rate talk. He had personality. I've known him to go right into a pulpit, on a Sunday night, and preach a sermon about the importance of clean, healthy recreation and the educational value of a menagerie. Oh, he was good.

There's a good deal I could say about this business of Miss Melrose, but I'm not going to do it. What's the good? I wasn't hardboiled like Buff Gray and most of the rest of the circus crowd. The plain fact is, it made me blue. Oh, there's enough I could tell. You see, I began to find out that she was pretty lonely, and the first thing I knew she was making a quiet kind of play at me. I had to drive her so much. And I was lonely, too. But I was set against her, in an excited sort of way. Even the day I drove her to Hartford from Albany, and she came up and rode in the front seat with me and bought me waffles at a tea-house in the country I hated it. I had to fight to keep from saying something rude. I kept thinking of my mother. I thought about Mr. Bundy, too, and how he trusted me. It didn't seem to matter that he was hard as nails in his own life. The point was, he trusted me. That night, at the hotel in Hartford, she sent a lovely picture of herself around to my room. It was in costume. She had been in some musical show. I was scared about it and hid the picture in my suitcase.

The boss came to the hotel in the morning and looked me up.

"Sandy," he said, "I want you to take Miss Melrose over to the depot for the eleven o'clock train to New York. Wait there until eleven-twenty-three for Mrs. Bundy and my daughter. They are coming up from New York. You'd better stay right with the car. They'll find you."

He brought her out to the car himself, and she just nodded to me and said, "Good morning." At the depot, though, right in front of the red cap man, she leaned close to me and said, "Did you like my picture, Sandy?" I said yes, and then felt myself turning red. And then she had to hurry to the train.

Mrs. Bundy was a fine looking woman but pretty firm and sure of herself. The daughter was a mighty attractive girl of about sixteen. The mother said, "You're Sandy, I suppose?" I said yes, and made a point of showing that I knew all the tricks of a city chauffeur in helping them into the car and putting the lap robe over them. I was still pretty upset, but made up my mind that I wouldn't show it. Not for a million dollars. I was wondering how the boss would act when he met them. But I needn't have worried, for he didn't bat an eye. He kissed them both and took them right up to their suite. And he just took it for granted I wouldn't peep. He didn't so much as warn me to be careful. Just took everything for granted. It was the same way out at the lot in the afternoon. Everybody was awfully polite and danced around for them. I thought a lot of things as I watched Buffalo Gray showing them around. The family stayed over night, and so did he. Then the next day we took them back to the depot and I drove him up to Springfield to catch up with the show.

I made a point of seeing all I could of Buffalo and Jack Wilson. And once in a while, when the evening show was on, Ben Green would stroll around and sit with me in the car. Buffalo was pretty good fun. He always had stories to tell. You see, that fellow just naturally loved to talk. He was fond of everybody, right away, that would listen to him. But was drinking a good deal, bootleg stuff that he picked up 'most everywhere we went. Just quietly stewing in it. And I thought, from things he said, that he was beginning to be afraid of losing his job. For there wasn't much drinking with the show. The acrobats couldn't, of course, and neither could the animal men. It was pretty much all business there on the lot.

I LIKED Jack Wilson best. I used to slip in pretty regularly at nine-thirty to see his feature act on the stage. By this time the circus crowd all knew me, and I could wander in anywhere without being questioned. And after he was dressed he'd come and sit in the car with Roddy. One night when the boss was up in Boston he and I talked until all hours there in the car. He was telling me in his thoughtful way how he studied up his acts. I began to see more clearly then what Buffalo meant in calling him a great artist. I never knew a man who was more serious and careful about his work. And him a clown! It seemed funny. But it was interesting. We drifted after that into talking baseball. You know how it is. A ball player, a real one who loves the game as all the real ones do, will talk until he dies. And then we got somehow into personal talk, I don't remember just how. Anyway, before I knew it I was telling him about my mother and how I remembered her and how I just had to hunt for her, one place or another, until I found her. It was funny, when you stop to think, that I should have done that. There wasn't anybody else connected with the show that I would have told. But Jack made you feel that he was a friend.

And after that he came back at me in a way I shall never forget, in the light of what happened afterward. He said, "I've got a mighty interesting story, too. Been living through it for six years now. What do you think of this?" And he got out one of those leather folders you carry photographs in. He kept it in the inside left-hand pocket of his coat, right over his heart; I couldn't help noticing that — and showed me the picture of a very pretty girl, a young girl, with her hair tied with a bow at the back of her neck.

"She was fifteen when that was taken," he said. "We're going to be married next June, on her eighteenth birthday. We've got it all planned. I'm having an addition built now on my little farmhouse. And I'm doing the garage over. You see, Sandy, I found her when she was only eleven. I used to knock around some in those days. You know how a fellow will now and then. Her mother ran a roadhouse in New York State, outside of Albany. It was no place for a nice kid. She's a wonderful kid, Sandy. Well, they had a pretty bad mix-up there one night, and her mother was shot. Perhaps you saw something about it in the papers. A State senator was mixed up in it, and some theatrical men. She was a Mrs. Waterson. There was quite a row at the time."

"No, Jack," said I. "I haven't heard of it. But I didn't know much of what was going on down east here."

"No, I suppose you didn't. Well, as soon as I read about it I got to thinking about the kid. Finally I went up there. Some neighbors were taking care of her. Making her work for her keep. She was very unhappy. Just a lonesome little kid, you know, without any folks. I didn't have any family, or anybody dependent on me, so I took her over. The kid. Put her in a good boarding school, and arranged with the woman that ran the school to give her a decent home summers. She's in a finishing school now in New Jersey. This next year's her last. I kept getting fonder and fonder of her. You know, paying the bills, and all the time having wonderful kid letters from her. Finally, last March, when the show was in Brooklyn, I went to the school to see her. I felt pretty awkward at that, going into that school place. We talked it all over there. She was 'most seventeen, and really a grown-up girl in her feelings. I told her how I was alone in the world, and just had to have some one to take care of besides my dog, and that if she'd say the word, I'd just go on taking care of her always. Well, would you believe it, she said yes. She writes me every week. You see, she has always felt almost too grateful to me." He took out a thick bunch of letters from that same pocket. "Here's some of them. She's mighty happy about the plans. I tell you, Sandy, she's a wonderful kid. I've got about twenty thousand dollars saved up in bonds in a trust company in New York, and I own my place outright. And with the salary I get now it'll be easy to save up a lot more. She's wild about traveling with me after we're married and living on the farm summers. What do you think, Sandy, am I too old to marry a kid of eighteen? I'm thirty-six."

"I don't see why," said I.

"Neither do I. And I'm going to try to make her happy. I don't think about anything else much when I'm alone. Anyway, we're going to try it. I've made a will, down there with the trust company, leaving everything to her whatever happens. She knows about that. She thinks I'm too good to her. But a fellow has to take care of somebody. You see, Sandy, this is a pretty jazzy country. A fellow can't bat around as much as I have without seeing that."

"I've seen it, too."

"And when you're as old as I am you'll find a lot of the time that you want to turn away from the whole crazy mess to something you can believe in. Raise a family, you know. Just turn back to something simple and real. Damn it, a fellow has to have something he can hang on to. Something solid. I never was much on religion and that sort of thing. But I tell you, you've got to find something."

I asked him then—the question that had been right on the end of my tongue for weeks: "Where is your farm, Jack?"

"Near Little River—out on Long Island."

"Is that your town? Where you get your mail, I mean?"

"Yes, Little River. You must come out and see the place, Sandy. It's plain. I'm a plain fellow. But it's comfortable. I always hop out there the minute the show season is over. Even if I have a good vaudeville offer for the winter, I figure on a few weeks there at home. Why don't you come with me when we close?"

"I'll do that, Jack," said I.

I'VE noticed that once queer things begin happening in your life, they come along fast for a while. Of course we all know the old sayings that troubles never come singly and it never rains but it pours. It's almost always that way in baseball. Usually a team is all hitting at once or else for a while none of them can hit anything. If an accident happens some more are sure to follow quick. Within two weeks of the time I broke my leg a third of the Carversville club were hobbling around with Charley horses and strains and the pitchers turned up with lame arms or attacks of boils. Well, this was one of those times in my life. Not that I was hit so hard personally, but things began to happen, things that I felt. It began with that uncomfortable business of Miss Melrose. There wasn't a day that she didn't give me a look or say some quiet little thing that bothered me. I was expecting every hour that the Boss would see something, and begin suspecting me. I was sure I wouldn't last long. Here I was, guilty of absolutely nothing. I mean I'd fought it. The truth is that situation disheartened me. You know what I mean. I was afraid I'd lose what was left of my faith in folks. But still I felt guilty as hell. If anybody spoke quickly I jumped. I schemed to protect myself. I hung on to the men, planned to keep them with me, made talk, everything.

The show was to play a week in Boston. The trains pulled out early in the morning, Sunday, so the canvas could go up during the day, and the whole outfit could have a rest up to the time of the parade Monday noon. I drove the Boss and Miss Melrose up Sunday afternoon to one of the swell hotels. She went right in, but the Boss met a couple of men he knew standing in front of the hotel and he talked with them. They were the sort of men I was used to seeing him with in most of the cities, both more or less middle-aged, one, whose name was Kern, a big fellow with a lot of nose and an expensive cigar in his face all the time, the other a thin fellow of the name of McGlone. I'd guess they were both politicians. Well, they kidded a while in a good-natured way, and then something was said about a party. The Boss said "You're on!" And then Kern winked and asked the Boss if he thought he could get away. He said, "Sure I can," and all of them laughed. I couldn't help hearing most of what was said. Of course I sat there like a clothes-dummy and didn't let myself show any interest, but I was thinking all the time how simple rich people are about letting the people that work for them see their weaknesses. They don't seem to stop to think that a chauffeur is a pretty human critter with ears and eyes in his head and opinions of his own. It's a fact. They don't. Women especially. They just take you as part of the scenery. You might as well be a horse for all they know. And my word, the things I've heard chauffeurs tell when a bunch of them get to talking, late at night in some garage or other! Some of those fine birds would shake in their shoes if they could hear a little of that chatter. You see, most of them, the chauffeurs, I mean, only put on that quiet front while their employers are around. They know it pays. Nearly all of them are on the make. They shake down the garage and supply men. They even collect a percentage out of the cost of a single night's storage. Oh, it's quite a game! All you have to do is keep a straight face and then look out for yourself.

It was about half-past six by this time, the Boss went back to the hotel for a few minutes, and Kern and McGlone stood there right at my elbow talking over which of a lot of roadhouses they'd introduce him to. Then finally they agreed on one somewhere up north of the city. Then the Boss came out, lighting a cigar, and they directed me to a smaller hotel under an elevated road there on a side street. A little after seven they came out of that place with three girls. Young girls they were, and awfully pretty. I figured from the look on the faces of the men and the way the girls laughed, that they'd had a drink or two. They all crowded into the car. McGlone took one of the folding seats and pushed back the glass slide so he could tell me where to drive. We went out across the city and through places they saw, and said were Somerville, Malden and Everett, and then for a long distance on a highway through the country.

Finally we pulled into the yard of a roadhouse that was set off in some woods quite a little way off the main road. It had a big glassed-in porch around it. All the curtains were drawn but you could see cracks of light around the windows, and when I shut off the motor I could hear an orchestra. After they had gone in I backed the car in with a lot of others that were waiting there and sat thinking. All the time I could see Aunt Ella as she had looked that last couple of years in her wheel chair with her fingers all twisted up and that sick, tired look on her face. She never complained but you couldn't help knowing that she suffered all the time. I thought about Uncle Fred too. I felt pretty blue about the whole business, and had been thinking a lot, especially since the puzzling mix-up with Miss Melrose, that playing ball was a damn sight healthier. But as it stood, I couldn't play ball, regular ball, anywhere in America except back at Carversville. I was certainly getting pretty well fed up with being a chauffeur. At least in this sporting crowd. It went against the grain. You see, those years of careful training and the habits I had formed, and George Nelson's steady influence felt more like my kind of thing. I even fell to wondering why on earth I had gone chasing off around the country in that crazy, restless way. And then those old pictures of my mother came back. They always did when I was blue. It occurred to me that I might pick up a job driving for a decent quiet, family in a suburb of New York. That would be better. And there's a chance to hunt around the city.

IT WAS a rough night. I waited until three. When they came out they were all drunk. And all the way back I was thinking. Just thinking. The street in front of the hotel was perfectly still. Even the trolleys weren't running, so far as I could see. One man stood at the curb in front of the entrance. At first I thought it must be a doorman, but when I pulled up beside him I saw it was Buffalo, with his hat pulled down and his coat collar turned up against the chill of the early morning air and a very white face.

He came right up to me and asked: "Is he drunk?"

I nodded.

He didn't say anything more then, but helped me lift the Boss out and get him into the hotel. Then he got in beside me on the driver's seat.

"Are we going to the lot?" I asked.

"Drive to the train," he said, "and step on it."

I'm not given to asking questions, so I just drove along. It was plain enough that something serious was in the wind. I was beginning to think it quite a night. Buffalo just couldn't talk. I could see that. He lit a cigaret and threw it away, and then lit another. His hands were shaking. I pulled in as near as I could get to the train, and we hurried over to the siding where the sleeping cars were.

Then, while we were stumbling over that way, Buffalo said, in a choking voice—

"Shavings has killed himself."

I stopped dead. I think I grabbed his arm.

"Oh, no, Buff." It was all I could say.

"Yes. I found him."

We climbed up into the car. "Here," he said, "in the washroom." It was curious to find the car all quiet. I could even hear snores.

"Just about an hour ago," said Buff, in that shaky, husky voice, holding me a minute in the passage outside the washroom. "I heard a shot. It woke me up. At first I thought it must be a truck back-firing and rolled over to go to sleep again. But I began thinking it over, and then got up and looked around and found him. He was gone then. Went right away. I didn't see any good in waking everybody. Went and routed out the doctor."

We went in then. Poor old Jack lay on the floor, just as he had fallen, kind of crumpled up. The revolver was still in his hand. There was a pool of blood by his head. Dr. Simorski was sitting very quietly on the long leather seat, and the colored porter stood by the window showing the whites of his eyes. As soon as he saw us, the doctor said, "I've sent Harry Morton to call the authorities. We won't touch anything until they come." Harry was one of the press crowd with the show.

I can't tell how I felt. It just hit me. There wasn't a soberer, finer fellow in the world than Jack Wilson. Outside of George Nelson he was the best friend I had.

I saw a couple of papers lying by him on the floor that looked like letters and right away I knew it must be something his girl had done.

Then I heard a low whine back in the car. Roddy always slept with Jack.

"The dog is tied up in the berth," said Buffalo.

THEY don't have coroners in Boston. But a doctor came that they call a medical examiner. He was a stocky man with a keen interesting face and bushy hair like the pictures of Paderewski. He knew his job. Within ten minutes he had the whole story. He read the two notes on the floor and handed them to us. Buffalo read them first, while the examiner went on with his work, and then without a word handed them to me. The first was from the girl, written on a sheet of plain paper without any hotel or address or date.

"Dear Jack," it said, "I've met the man I love and have gone away with him. I couldn't help it. He is in vaudeville, and I'm going to work with him in his act. I'm going to save up until I can pay back all the wonderful things you've done for me. Please try to forgive me, if you can. And then forget me. I guess I never was the kind of a girl you thought."

"Postmarked Baltimore," said Buffalo, looking at the envelope.

The other note Jack had written himself with a pencil. It was a little hard to read because he didn't write very well. This is all he wrote—

> "To Sandy and Buff, well boys, it's all over, I can't keep it up alone. I did what I could, and it isn't enough. The Gibraltar Trust Company in New York has got my will. Tell them it goes, every word. Everything to the little girl, as soon as they can find her. She couldn't help herself never in the world. About the rest of my things, I mean the little things I've got here with the show, I want you two boys to divide them up, anything you want and perhaps give a few little things to my friends for keepsakes, if they want to have them, to help remember that old Shavings did make the kids laugh while he was doing his act and I want Sandy to have Roddy, because I know he'll take good care of the pup. You'll find a few hundred dollars in my pocket; that ought to be enough to bury me. There isn't anything else that I can—"

That was all. It occurred to me that he must have written it right there in the washroom. Yes, he had, for when I looked around I saw a pencil lying on the floor under one of the wash basins. And I picked up a copy of a story magazine that was lying on the seat and held it up to the light, and I could see the marks that the pencil made through the paper. He must have sat right there and used the magazine to write on.

I couldn't stay in there any longer. Roddy was whining again, very softly. He was a wonderful dog. I think he knew that he mustn't disturb the people that were sleeping in the car. He wanted Jack to come back to the berth. He was that way, you know—Airedales are. Jack used to have to tie him in the dressing tent while he was doing his act, and Roddy always whimpered kind of quietly until he came back. I just slipped out of the washroom. I don't know when I've felt so miserable, so solemn and hushed. I went up through the aisle to Jack's berth. They were still snoring, some of those sleepy folks, behind the curtains. I put my head in the berth and Roddy stopped his whimpering and looked at me through the tangle of silky gray-brown hair, that hung down in front of his eyes, and wagged his tail kind of hesitatingly as if he wasn't quite sure what it meant, my being there in the night. I got in with him then and took him into my arms and told him that he was my dog now, and that he was going everywhere I went, no matter where, and that I'd always take care of him. He wagged his tail more and shoved his head under my hand for me to rub his ears and even licked my cheek, but all the time had an ear cocked for the sound of Jack's step in the aisle that he was never going to hear again. I told him that, and then I just broke down like a kid. I couldn't help it. I'd never been up against death in just that way, where it was a friend I'd been close to, and it was more than I could stand. I knew right then that Jack had come to be the only tie that held me to the show, the only relationship that made me sometimes feel comfortable and as if I belonged there. Oh, I liked Buff Gray but not so well. He was entertaining, but I knew well enough that he and I would never go very far together. And Mr. Bundy was a little too hardboiled for me.

He seemed all right that next day. He came out to the lot early, before nine o'clock, and took charge of the funeral arrangements. He was kind enough, but businesslike of course. And Buffalo confided to me that they had instructions to play up poor Jack's tragedy in the papers for all it was worth. He said they wanted a Pagliacci story, whatever that was. I saw it in the headlines of the afternoon papers, but couldn't read the stuff. Roddy went around with me in the front seat of the car all day, and poked his head out on the side as if he enjoyed it in a way, but all the time I could see that he was looking for Jack. It was quite a while before he stopped doing that. Before such a great while, though, he adopted me for his master. An Airedale has to do that, you know. He has to have somebody he can tie himself up to and worship like. I asked Mr. Bundy if he minded my having him with me that way in the car and he said no, it was all right.

One thing this hushed sad feeling did for me, it made me think more than ever of poor Aunt Ella. I wrote to her that day.

The next day Mr. Bundy and Miss Melrose had a quarrel in the car. I couldn't help hearing every word, and I've never heard a man say meaner things to a woman. I was sorry for her, and I knew right then that I was through with him. It just wasn't my kind of life.

WHEN they got out at the hotel, she turned straight to me and handed me a twenty-dollar bill.

"Sandy," she said, "please get me a lower on the midnight for New York. Get me something. An upper if they haven't a lower. And perhaps Mr. Bundy won't mind if you drive me down to the station."

Well, I called for her about ten-fifteen. She was waiting down-stairs in the hotel with her baggage. She had a veil on. She didn't say anything when I put the things in the car except "Thank you, Sandy." But when we got to the South Station and the red cap man had her suitcases and bags she lifted her veil up around her hat and looked at me. I began feeling uncomfortable then. But she didn't say anything. Just gave me a little folded paper and went off to the train. After I'd got back into the car I opened the paper and saw that it was her address and telephone number in New York. I've thought since that the drive back to the lot and putting the car in under a canvas shelter and finding my berth on the train was one of the bluest times of all for me. The only comfort I had, the only thing I could hang on to, was Roddy. He seemed almost to understand me, the way he snuggled up close and fixed his big friendly eyes on me.

The next morning we all went to the funeral. There didn't seem to be any particular reason for taking what was left of poor Jack back to any other place, so he was buried in a cemetery near Boston. I took Roddy along and kept him on the leash, and he pressed against my leg and sniffed around and whimpered while the minister was reading the service. I wondered how much he knew of what was going on. When we got back to the lot I told Mr. Bundy that I wanted to go. He looked at me and chewed his cigar, and after a minute asked when. I explained that it would have to be as soon as he could get another man. He said that was all right, he'd have no difficulty in picking up a good man in Boston and I could go the next day if I wanted to. He did ask if I wasn't satisfied with my pay, but I explained that that wasn't it, at all. I said I would turn in my uniform, but he told me to keep it. When he asked where I was going I just told him I wasn't sure yet, but had some friends I wanted to see before taking another job. Then he said, "All right, Sandy. Good luck," and turned away. That was that.

Buffalo and I did the best we could dividing up Jack's things and giving out keepsakes to the folks in the show that had been fond of him. There were a good many of these. Jack was never much of a mixer and they hadn't known him intimately, but they respected and admired him. You see, he never drank or gambled, he never said anything mean about anybody, and he did his job. It was surprising how much we heard after his death of the kind little things he'd done for people. While he was living nobody ever knew much of anything about them, he was so quiet and minded his own business so closely. A good deal was said among the performers about what a fine artist he was. They all seemed to understand that. Some of what they said was a little over my head, I guess, but I'd like to put it down right here that he was a great old scout. That much about him I know, and it was all I needed to know. I miss him yet. You see, in all my experience since, and I'm going on twenty-four, I've never known a man who took such a deep, honest joy in his work. And that, I've come to think, is one of the biggest things in life. I kept for myself one of his white clown suits with the comic leather feet with toes and the little straw hat with the red band that he always wore over his left ear held on with an elastic band.

One thing I made up my mind to and did before I left the show. I cornered Ben Green that night and had quite a talk with him. This was after the evening audience had scattered for home. He thought I just wanted to say good-by, but that was the smallest part of it, really. I had my back up at last. You see, in the other talks we'd had, Ben and I, I'd been aching all the time to ask him more about my mother, but just couldn't do it. I felt queer about it, couldn't come through. But I was up to it now.

"Ben," I said—I remember that we were standing over across the street from the show grounds, in the doorway of the Opera House—"Ben, what was it about my mother? What was it she did?"

He looked at me in his slow cautious way, as if he was thinking me out, then asked, "You don't mean to say they never told you?"

"Not a thing. I've never known the facts about her leaving father. And up to now I haven't felt altogether like asking. But now I want to know. You know, don't you?"

"Yes," he said. "Sure. I know."

"Well, tell me."

"Why, you see, Sandy, there was a pretty boy named Douglas Vincent came to town for a month or two to put on the 'Mikado' for a hospital benefit. They hired this fellow to coach it. He was an actor and a tenor singer. Your mother was in the show. Well, she went crazy over him, and a few weeks after he'd left town she ran off and joined him. That was about all there was to it, but it killed your father. Queer, it isn't such a lot different from this trouble of poor Jack Wilson's. But then, there's a lot of those things going on all the time. You only have to read the papers."

I WENT to New York the next day on one of the six-hour trains with Roddy up in the baggage car. I had saved a little more than fifty dollars out of my two months' salary, and had about thirty left of the money I'd drawn when I joined the show, so I figured I could get along for a few weeks. I had a good letter of recommendation from Mr. Bundy to add to my collection saying that he wouldn't have let me go if he could help it. If I did run short of money I could always draw on the Carversville bank and get my answer within three or four days. I was all right.

I bought a New York paper at New Haven and went through the room-rent advertisements, then checked my things at the Grand Central station and with Roddy on the leash, went right around hunting for a place. Before eight o'clock I had a hall bedroom that seemed pretty clean up in fifty-something-th street and then went and got my things. After that, toward nine, the two of us walked down to Times Square and followed along with the crowds. The gay lights took my breath away at first. There hadn't been anything anywhere near so dazzling in the other cities I'd seen. All the time I felt rather breathless and stirred up. I kept saying to myself, "This is New York. This is New York." I had never seen such crowds or so many good-looking women or such a jam of traffic. We passed the big white restaurants with the name Childs over them. The whole front wall of each of them was plate glass so you could see everything inside, all the tables, and the tile walls and the cashier's desk. It was interesting to see the men in white caps cooking wheat cakes and muffins on slabs right inside those front windows. But I was disappointed to find that they had men waiters at night. I couldn't do anything real in looking around until the next day.

So finally Roddy and I went back to the lodging house and climbed up to our little room. There was just space enough in it for a narrow bed, a bureau, a little table, and two chairs. You couldn't say it was any too homelike. I took off my coat and vest, and sat on the edge of the bed to unlace my shoes. Roddy sat on the matting—I can smell that matting now—and looked at me with his head a little on one side. You know how dogs do.

"Well, old thing," I said. He cocked up an ear. "We've got a bit of a problem on our hands. I've got to go around to some of those restaurants tomorrow. It may be a long hunt. Now Roddy, I know and you know that they'll never let you in." He cocked the other ear. "I've got to leave you here. I hate to do it. You'll be lonesome. And I just know you'll never let them in to make the bed. Of course I could get around that by making it up myself in the morning. Guess I will. What do you say?" He cocked up both ears. Then he gave a little woof-woof. And then he jumped on me. If he liked you he just couldn't help it. Sometimes sixty-seven pounds of dog flying through the air toward your face comes to quite a blow. This time he took me unawares and bruised my lip so that it bled a little, just by hitting it with the end of his cold nose. Old Jack had tried every way to break him of this jumping, stepping on his hind feet and all that, but had finally given it up and just let him carry on. "See what you've done, you boob?" said I. I showed him my lip. He cocked an ear and said woof-woof.

"Listen, Roddy, I'll tell you how we'll work it out. First thing in the morning I'll take you out for a run. Maybe they'll make the bed while we're gone. Then I'll bring you back and shut you up here. Sorry, old bird, but there doesn't seem to be any way out of that. Then I'll go out and tackle those restaurants. You see, Roddy, my own mother worked in one of them not so very long ago. She must have been out of luck or she'd never have done that. Never in the world. The hell of it is, boy, I don't know anything of her story. My own mother. And I've got to find out, I've got a notion she needs me. Maybe she needs me pretty bad. Do you know what dear old Jack said to me the other night? He said that a fellow's got to have something he can hold on to. And I'll say it's the truth."

It may seem funny, but my eyes filled up then. Just sitting there in that little hall bedroom talking to that dog. But it did me good, I think. And he loved to be talked to. We turned in then. When I was taking my watch and things out of my pocket to put them on the bureau a folded piece of paper fell to the floor. I picked it up and turned it over in my hand, then unfolded it. There was the name, Estelle Melrose, something or other west eighty-fourth street, and the telephone number, Riverside, something or other.

"LOOK at that now," I said. "Here's that girl right here at the end of a telephone wire. Maybe she's home now, wondering if I'll call up. Shall I, Roddy?" He jumped up then, quick as a grasshopper, but I was quicker. I caught him and threw him on the bed. He thought I wanted to play, and sat back on his haunches ready for a spring, but then when I moved off, he put his nose down on his paws and followed me with his eyes. "No, you old devil," I said then. "No, we won't make fools of ourselves, will we?"

He said woof-woof. I put out the light, opened the window and got into bed, and he stretched out beside me and tried to lick my face. I couldn't get to sleep at first. Too many things to think about. But finally I did.

In the morning, before eight, I gave him a real run in the park. Then I put him in the room and started out. My leg was aching a little. I'd been using it harder than I realized in all that driving. I walked to the nearest Childs restaurant and had a cup of coffee and some cereal. Then I went on down through Times Square and had wheat cakes at another. I was in five of those places altogether between then and noon, and in all of them I sat and watched the waitresses. Some of them were pretty young. Others were older. Nearly all of them looked kind of tired. They had to carry heavy trays and work fast. I got one or two funny starts seeing women with red hair, but none of these looked like my mother. I wanted to go up to the desks and ask about her, but couldn't quite make myself do it. It hadn't occurred to me before that I had no idea what she called herself. She might use our name and she might not. Her maiden name was Elting. Maybe she used that. Then there was this Vincent fellow. Probably she had become Mrs. Vincent. Though if he had stuck by her she would hardly have had to go to work as a waitress. You wouldn't think so. Anyway, I couldn't help feeling kind of forlorn and helpless. The thing was so personal. It was hard to go at it like you'd go at a job you had to do for somebody else. And besides I guess the big town was riding me a little. It does at first, you know. Everybody dressed so well and seemed to have such an ungodly lot of money to spend. There seemed to be millions of expensive automobiles. And the people were all too busy and too sure of themselves to have any time for a young fellow who'd played a little ball in Indiana and put in a couple of months as a chauffeur.

I took Roddy a big dinner and talked to him while he ate it, up in the room. It made me bluer, even, when I got back and he jumped all over me like a rattle-headed pup, to think I'd have to leave him alone there so much of the time. I began to feel that I was pretty rattle-headed myself. I didn't seem to be going at my problem in a very intelligent way. So we talked about that.

"Not a sign of her yet, Roddy. Of course that was a few years ago. God knows where she is now. Come to think of it, Roddy, nobody keeps on carrying those heavy trays any longer than they can help. Now, would they? I ask you. It's mean work. I'll bet you every one of those women and girls is looking around for something else to do. I'll tell you, old scout, you can't sit in restaurant after restaurant watching those women hurrying around without doing a heap of thinking. Ordinarily you know, you don't pay much attention to the women that wait on you. Oh, when our club was traveling around some of the boys used to flirt with the waitresses. You know, kid them along. But today I found myself thinking how all those women were just folks. They all came from somewhere, had folks of their own somewhere. A lot of them must have been married. Now they're just drifting around to the big town, picking up jobs, living somehow. Roddy, I don't believe the people that are prosperous and have comfortable homes put in much time thinking about all the thousands of women that are just drifting around. It does sort of make you stop and think, now doesn't it? I ask you. Tell you what we're going to do now, old thing. We're going to the Polo Grounds and see the New York Giants play the Cincinnati Reds. That's what we're going to do. Just you and me! We're going to see where George Nelson used to dig 'em up around first base. We're going to see John McGraw himself. And say, boy, maybe old Rube Walling'll be there! Sure he will. Tell you another little thing, we're going to blow ourselves too, boy, we're going to spend real money for a box seat right down by the Giants' dugout, and maybe the Rube'll come and say something. How'll that be, you old bundle of rags?" And Roddy cocked both ears and said woof-woof and jumped all over me.

So we went up to the Polo grounds in a taxi. It was extravagant, but they wouldn't let Roddy on the elevated train. I had read about the place, and once saw a picture post-card of the stands, but honest, I never dreamed they could be so big. They made our old wooden stands out in Carversville look like a cowshed. A great big horseshoe of concrete, two stories high, and roofed over, with steel truss supports and decorations and a lot of flags flapping. There were sloping runways of concrete to take you up and down without any steps to climb, and rows of front boxes all the way around behind the home plate from somewhere in left field to deep right field. There weren't any low-priced seats at all, except some bleachers out in center field, a long way off. And the seats and stands reached all the way around the playing field. I had heard this said, but don't think I really believed it until this afternoon. I felt so excited that I had to hang on to myself and just pat Roddy a little. I was afraid I'd laugh out loud or something. They hadn't then built the big additions to the stands that carried them, both stories, nearly all the way around the field. The tremendous Yankee Stadium wasn't built then either. You see this was the late summer of 1921, and those weren't done until 1923. But perhaps it's just as well I saw the Polo Grounds the old way first. I'm not sure I could have stood the magnificence of the new parks at that first experience in the big town. I'd have laughed or cried or something. I can see now that I was in a pretty worked-up state, anyway. Generally I'm cool and quick to think. But Jack's death and that unsettling experience with Miss Melrose and then being in the big town for the first time and wandering around kind of forlorn looking for my mother didn't have a very steady effect on me. It was a queer time, take it altogether.

About twenty of the Giants were out on the grass right in front of our box passing the ball and romping around to limber up for the game, and some others were coming and going on the dugout steps. I could have touched some of them if I had leaned out a little. Twenty-five men they had! That must be wonderful, I thought. We never had more than sixteen at a time on our payroll, and whenever two or three of the regulars were laid up we had to play pitchers in the outfield and sometimes even in the infield. Johnny Guild, our second-string catcher, was old George's substitute at first base. But McGraw had a flock of utility men, and could switch from right-handed to left-handed batters when a left-hander went into the box, if he wanted to, without weakening his team a bit. He had assistant managers, too, and coaches, and an expert rubber for the men. Everything! And you could be pretty sure, any year, with all the power he had and the money for building up a championship club that they'd at least win the National League pennant and every blessed man of them would have a cut at the World Series money. And salaries? My word. There were men drawing down ten and fifteen thousand a year on that team. I'll bet not one of the regulars were getting less than six or eight thousand. And the utility men must have stood the club at least two or three thousand apiece. Maybe more. I suppose every man of the lot owned his automobile. Some of them owned their homes. It made my little hundred a month look like one of the last year's bats. Oh, it was the big time! No doubt about that. And didn't they know it! I had never seen a huskier, better looking lot of ball players. And I have never seen such confidence. You could feel it just in the way they kidded each other as they played around there. A great team! A very great team!

I SUPPOSE a ball player sitting there in the stands doesn't think about it the way the fans do. I do know they don't. I was looking at the beautiful surface of the playing field, all the fine hard turf except the wide half-moon of dirt behind the base paths. You could see that even the ground-keeper and his men took a pride in their work. I'd never played on a field like that. I wondered some if the tremendous high stands with all their shadows didn't bother the infield and the outfield on fly balls. You see the infield and of course the outfield were all out in the bright sunshine, staring straight into those dark stands on every play. You'd have to get used to that. And I got to thinking how the right fielder would go about handling the bounds off the short right-field wall. That would take a lot of morning practice. You could see that.

The gong rang, and the teams took their infield practice. And oh, they knew their job. No end of life and snap to it. And pretty soon two or three pitchers began warming up right in front of us. One of them was the Rube. No doubt about it. I'd have known that big slouching figure anywhere in the world. He had learned some things, too. His motion was easier, and smoother than ever, and that long left arm whipped them into the catcher's mit like a bullet. I hugged Roddy close but didn't say anything. Of course it wouldn't do to talk out loud to him the way I'd been doing up in the room.

The Rube didn't pitch the game. A right-hander went it. The big fellow stuffed his glove into his hip pocket and came shambling back to the dugout. He was coming right by me. I leaned forward and said, "Rube. Oh! Rube."

He stopped on the top step and looked at me.

He had learned to be kind of dignified. He was a real hero now, you know, and there must have been people all the time running after him and making up to him.

"Remember Sandy Burr?" I asked.

He looked at me a minute longer, and then began to grin and stuck out his hand that used to look to me as big as a ham. It still looked pretty big.

"Well," said he. "Well, old Sandy! What you doing here?"

"Oh, looking around."

"Why ain't you playing?"

"Broke my leg."

"You don't say. That's tough. I was hoping you'd be in here with us, Sandy. Mac asked me about you after George Nelson wrote to him last year."

"I guess I just stared at him. Then I said, "Oh, did George write to McGraw about me?"

"Sure. Surest thing you know. You see, Kid, he figured you'd fit in as a utility infielder. Mac was afraid of your hitting. But George told him you was the smartest young infielder he ever saw."

"Did George say that, Rube?"

"Surest thing you know! He figured you was as slick an infielder as any boy anywhere in the bushes. And he saw you got on oftener than a lot of heavier hitters with your waiting and your speed. Oh, George cracked you up all right. Trouble is, Mac is looking for boys that are natural hitters. You know how it is."

"Funny! I didn't know anything about it. Well, I guess it's all off now."

"I dunno. How's your leg?"

"Pretty weak. Have to baby it still."

"Be all right in the spring, won't it?"

"Maybe. Can't say."

"Well, look here, Kid. I'll introduce you to Mac after the game. He remembers you. That bird never forgets nothing. He might be willing to try you out down South in the spring. Here goes the ball game."

And then we watched the play. The Rube hung over the front of the box most of the time until the sixth inning, when he had to go out to the bull pen to warm up. But he wasn't needed. That right-hander finished the game all right. The Giants won. They mostly did then, and since.

After the Rube went, a fellow in the next box leaned over and patted Roddy. I had noticed him when we came in. He was a quiet chap, older than me. But he looked like the sporting kind. You know, a kind of weather-beaten face and quiet eyes, and pretty well dressed. You can't miss them. At first I thought maybe he'd been a ball player, like me. Then afterward, just from the way he took hold of Roddy and talked to him, I decided it was horses and dogs. He was small, and might have been a jockey. Especially when I saw that he had a little gold horseshoe with a whip stuck through it for a necktie pin.

"Well, you great big beautiful dog," he said. And the way he handled Roddy made the pup reach right up and try to lick his face. He knew dogs, all right. Roddy didn't usually warm up to strangers like that, all at once.

"A great dog," said this fellow to me. "Where'd you ever get him?"

He belonged to a friend of mine that died," said I. "But you know he doesn't look like an Airedale to me. That's what he's supposed to be."

"Of course he is. He's perfect." He was feeling Roddy's chest and his strong straight front legs. "They're breeding 'em too fine nowadays. It's the fad, and it's a mistake. This fellow is right out of the old Masterpiece strain. He's a real Airedale. You ought to look him up, get his pedigree."

So you see it was quite a day for Roddy as well as for me. He knew he was being praised. Yes, sir, he knew it. Held his shaggy head right up proudly.

AFTER the game the Rube took me down into the dugout and introduced me to McGraw. He was civil enough. Spoke of Old George. Said he ought to be managing a real club, and would be one of these days. I felt kind of abashed down there, realizing that I'd shaken the hand of John McGraw, and that every one of the players jostling around us was a famous man The Rube introduced me to them, too, as the boy who worked for George Nelson and stole thirty-seven bases last year. He knew that!

They were pleasant enough, but you could see that they all had other things to think about. I couldn't say a word. What was the use? After all, I was nothing but a bush leaguer with a broken leg. They weren't interested. How could they be?

And I don't know but what I felt smaller riding back downtown than I had riding up. I felt funny and lonely. The big town was too much for me. I didn't seem to belong. When we were back in the room I talked it over with Roddy.

"Old Scout," I said, "do you know what I think? I think we're in wrong. We're not getting anywhere. We can't go on for weeks using up money and shutting you up in the room while I sit in Childs' restaurants. No, sir, we're not getting anywhere. And one thing I'm sure of, this city is no place for a big dog like you."

I kept on thinking it over while I was out in another of those restaurants, forlornly watching the waitresses. And when I got back I said this to him—

"Roddy, I've made up my mind. We're going to dash out. I've paid a week's rent, but never you mind. What we've got to do is go out into the country where folks aren't all skylarking around and spreading money, and where you can have room to run around. And I know the place, old thing. Just the place. It's away out toward the other end of Long Island. It's called Little River. Just a country place, where folks get married and raise families and crops and live right. You see there aren't any big cities at the other end of Long Island. There's room out there, and there's air to breathe. And there's a girl there named Jane Wood. She might be able to tell us a little something, if we can get to know her. We'll try. She raises ducks. Maybe she likes dogs. If she does it'll help a lot. We'll just put this down as one big day and get out. Clean out. It *has* been a big day, you know. Now don't you go jumping at me, even if you are the real old Masterpiece strain. You needn't be cocky about it. We've met John McGraw, and that's something isn't it. We can go after that, now can't we? Yes, sir, we'll go tomorrow. I can see it now, plain, if we stay here we're just going to get lonesomer and lonesomer, and then I'm likely to begin not caring much what happens and go to calling upon Miss Melrose. You wouldn't like me to do that, would you, Roddy?" I held his head up and asked him again, and he said woof-woof.

So we packed up in the morning and took a taxi down to the Long Island station, that was down underneath an enormous marble palace, and rode through the tunnel and out past Jamaica into open country in a clean, bright steel train.

The funny thing about the next two months was that I couldn't make myself do anything about getting acquainted with Jane Wood. I just couldn't. I suppose maybe it was because I'd thought so much by myself about my mother, and had nobody I could really talk it out with. I know that brooding isn't ever a good thing for a young fellow, and yet I did brood. I'd been doing it for years. Sometimes I felt queer and almost ashamed about my mother being a runaway woman who'd had to work in restaurants and all like that, just knocking round like all those women you couldn't explain that I'd seen working and walking round in New York. Sometimes it was just a kind of ache. My dreams bothered me some too. You see, while I was all mixed up about it and part of the time seemed to be thinking about fifty other things, yet that one thing was always somehow on my mind, and I can see now that it was what really drove me all the time and kind of accounted for just about everything I did and didn't do. If it hadn't been there in my mind I wouldn't have found a bit of trouble in going out to the duck farm and telling Jane Wood who I was and that I knew her father. But just because I cared so much about what was back of my being there at all I was kind of paralyzed. I suppose that was it. Why, if I hadn't cared, I mean in that personal way, I could have told her I was looking for a person and that I understood she had seen her, and asked a lot of questions. As it stood, I couldn't. Not right away. And all the time I felt that that person might be needing me terribly.

I found a clean, comfortable room in a private house to live in, after a few days at the Little River Inn. I couldn't stay on there. It was altogether too expensive. I went to the garage that first afternoon and asked for a job, but they didn't have anything then. It was run by a Scotch fellow who was a very good mechanic, people said, with two helpers and a boy. They seemed to have a pretty good business. The village was small, just a few streets of scattered houses and one main street with some country stores on it and little gimcrack shops where the automobilists could buy cigars and ice-cream cones and magazines. But a good many folks lived outside on the country roads and there were some prosperous families over on the shore of the Sound, and the Little River garage was the nearest place for them all to take their cars to. And then there was some transient trade, of course.

THE fellow that ran the garage was named Jim, Jim McIntosh. He wasn't more than thirty, a hard-working man, with light hair. He was friendly enough, but all business. I showed him my letters the first time I asked for a job, and told him I'd like to stay a while in the town. I told him the exact truth, that I was not a veteran mechanic but that I'd done a lot of helping and knew how to make myself useful. After that I just made it a point to be at the garage every day, hanging around to see if a chance wouldn't turn up to make myself useful. There was several weeks of this dragging along. I won't say I liked that part of it, but the village was a clean little place and I was kind of glad just to be there after the gay life I'd seen.

Everybody took to Roddy, and that didn't hurt my chances any. I got a chance to do a little driving now and then. One night a rich man stopped at the inn and left his car to be washed and to have the grease cups gone over. The boy that washed the cars was home with the grippe, and I asked Jim to let me do the work. It was a chance to show that I was quick and thorough, and I jumped at it. The car was a beauty, and I'll bet I gave it the best cleaning it ever had. The man spoke of it the next day. He was a sport from the big town. Other little chances came up, and finally, after about a month of waiting around I just naturally drifted in there in brand new overalls and worked steadily. People seemed to like me. Most of the men knew by this time that I was a ball player, and there was talk of putting me in to run the town team the next year that played a lot of twilight and Sunday games. I didn't say much myself, because I didn't think I'd be staying that long, and besides I wasn't sure whether even that small town business mightn't outlaw me if Uncle Fred or any of the league men ever heard I was doing it. I just wasn't sure about that. But the talk helped me in the village. Gave me a kind of standing. And all that time I was scheming round in a footless sort of way how I could come to know Jane Wood so it would seem natural. One day I asked the postmaster—Henry Arbuckle, who was a great baseball fan and had talked to me some about playing there—if he knew a Miss Wood who raised ducks. He smiled when he heard the name, as if he was thinking of something, and then said, "Oh, yes, you mean Wood and Watkins. Yes, sure, those girls are raising ducks on the old Mainwaring place, three miles out on the Wading River road. Why, is she a friend of yours?"

I said no, I just knew some relations of hers, and changed the subject.

It was about the beginning of my third month in the town that this thing I'm going to tell happened. I was helping Jim hoist the engine of a six-cylinder car, and then it would be my job, after we had taken it down, to wash the parts and put all the bolts in the right boxes and that sort of thing. A muddy old flivver was standing in the back of the shop with a flat tire, and without thinking I laid my coat on the running-board while we got that motor out.

We were most through when I heard a voice say "Oh!" and then I heard Roddy growl. I had forgotten about him. He was sitting there against my coat and it wasn't his idea to let anybody touch the flivver while the coat was there. Then I saw what I thought was a boy moving back from Roddy. I said, "Wait a minute, Son," and went over to get my coat.

It wasn't a boy at all, but a girl in knickerbockers that looked as if they'd been worked in for years and a short coat of brown leather and a cap. A snappy little person. Not a beauty, but slim and trim and business like, with short hair, rather light than dark, and blue eyes. They weren't soft, round, baby-blue eyes, like Miss Melrose's, but straight-out, sensible eyes. I had never seen a girl just like her. She didn't look an inch over five feet high, but she made you feel that you'd have to keep your wits about you if you had to talk with her.

I said, "I beg your pardon," and spoke to Roddy and picked up the coat.

Then I could see that she was sizing Roddy up. Those eyes of hers looked as if she wasn't missing much of anything."

"That's a good looking dog," she said, then, and patted his head. She didn't have to stoop over much, at that.

"Yes," said I, "he's a good dog."

"He isn't an Airedale, is he?"

"Oh, yes. Of the old Masterpiece strain." I'm afraid I couldn't help saying this with a little pride. I must have, really, because then she looked up from him to me. Maybe she thought I didn't speak so rough as the usual garage man. I don't know. Perhaps I just wanted to believe that. I wasn't such a fool as to think of making a play at her, or anything like that. But anyway, she looked me all over, she did, from my greasy overalls up to my rumpled red hair. I caught sight of my black hands then, and thought all at once that my face was probably just about as black, and it came over me that as I stood there I was nothing on earth but a young fellow that worked in a garage, all covered with grease, like forty thousand other young fellows that worked in garages. Yes, I was just exactly nothing at all.

Jim came over and said, "I haven't been able to get at that tire yet, Miss Wood. But we'll fix it right up. I think the casing's all right. It's just a little job of vulcanizing. Sandy here'll do it."

"How long will it take?" she asked.

"Oh, half an hour."

"All right. I'll wait." She smiled at Roddy then, and mussed up his ears. He didn't mind. I noticed that her nose wrinkled up when she smiled. But you're not to think I stood around looking at her very long; I didn't. I went to work quick, jacking up the car and taking the tire off the wheel. I never worked faster in my life. For this was Jane Wood. And she had seen my mother.

WE DID the vulcanizing in a shed directly back of the garage. As soon as I had got the tire off the wheel and the tube out I took it out there. Roddy started after me, and then looked back to see if Miss Wood wasn't coming along. She laughed a little, wrinkling up her nose in that attractive way, and followed, and then stood over me while I tried out the tube in the water bucket to find the leak and then put the patch on and clamped it in the vulcanizing frame. She seemed interested in watching what I was doing and asked a few questions. Then she said, "It doesn't look very complicated. I don't see why I couldn't get an outfit and learn to do it myself."

I was trembling with excitement. I told myself it was silly, but couldn't help it. I asked if she was interested in mechanical jobs, and she answered, "Oh, yes." She sat on a box and Roddy laid his head on her knee to have his ears rubbed, and she was perfectly willing to talk. But I knew I would have to know her better, and wondered sort of helplessly if I'd ever have the chance. I couldn't to save me feel different from what I knew I looked like, just a greasy red-headed fellow in overalls working there in the Little River garage.

I realize well enough how silly all this sounds as I write it down. Silly of me, I mean. But I'm not so sure that it really was. I mean the way things stood at the time. You can't, if you're a husky young mechanic, go around asking perfect strangers if they can tell you something about your mother. How can you? It might take so much explaining. They'd think you were crazy. You had to know your person some. And you did have to lead up to it. You did. And that other thing entered into it that I've said something about before, the thing you come to feel after you've batted around a little among practical people, that you can't let every Tom, Dick, and Harry know much about what's really driving you on, the thing you keep hidden under your everyday surface. I was thinking like mad while I worked away there, wondering what she'd think if she found that I came to Little River just to find her and ask her that question. In that same crazy, excited way, too, I began thinking about Ben Green. Buffalo had said that she didn't have much to do with him. Ben himself had let me know that he went years on end without seeing anything of her. She might not like to be reminded of him. You couldn't tell until you knew her pretty well. Certainly she wasn't his kind. In spite of the spatterings of old paint on her knickerbockers and shoes and the old leather coat, there was something brisk and clean and fresh about her. You could see that she was a worker. You could see, too, that she was a nice person. Nothing at all like wise, rough old Ben. Of course she wouldn't want to be classed with him. It might even work against me, right there, too, at the beginning of our acquaintance, that I knew Ben, that I had really come direct from him. It was clear enough what she had done. She had broken away from him and all he stood for, and was working it out in her own way. Very possibly he was the sensitive spot in her life. No, the thing was to be patient. It was something that she was willing to talk with me at all. And Roddy was working for me, bless his dog heart!

So I said, "It wouldn't cost you much to buy a vulcanizing outfit." Then I kind of braced myself and added this: "If you care to have me I'll come out and show you how to use it."

That was as far as I could get, this first time. I'm not sure, at that, that I was altogether honest about it. It's really simpler for most folks with tire trouble to run into a garage and get expert help. When a tire does go down it's always possible that the casing is damaged. She'd never be able to do anything about that. Though, on the other hand, living miles out in the country, an occasional job of vulcanizing might come in pretty handy.

"I've been so busy," she said, "that I really haven't given any time to the cars. We have a station wagon out there, too, that we use for the light trucking. It belongs to Watkins. I ought to know how to take a tire off and put it on."

"It's pretty useful to know that," said I. "I'll tell you, if you'll just stand by while I put this one on, you'll get something of the idea. But what you really ought to do is to go through with it two or three times with somebody that understands it standing over you."

"Yes, I suppose so," said she.

We went back then and she watched and asked questions while I put the tire back. Then before she backed out, she said, "I'll speak to Watkins about the vulcanizing outfit, and call you up. When could you bring it out?"

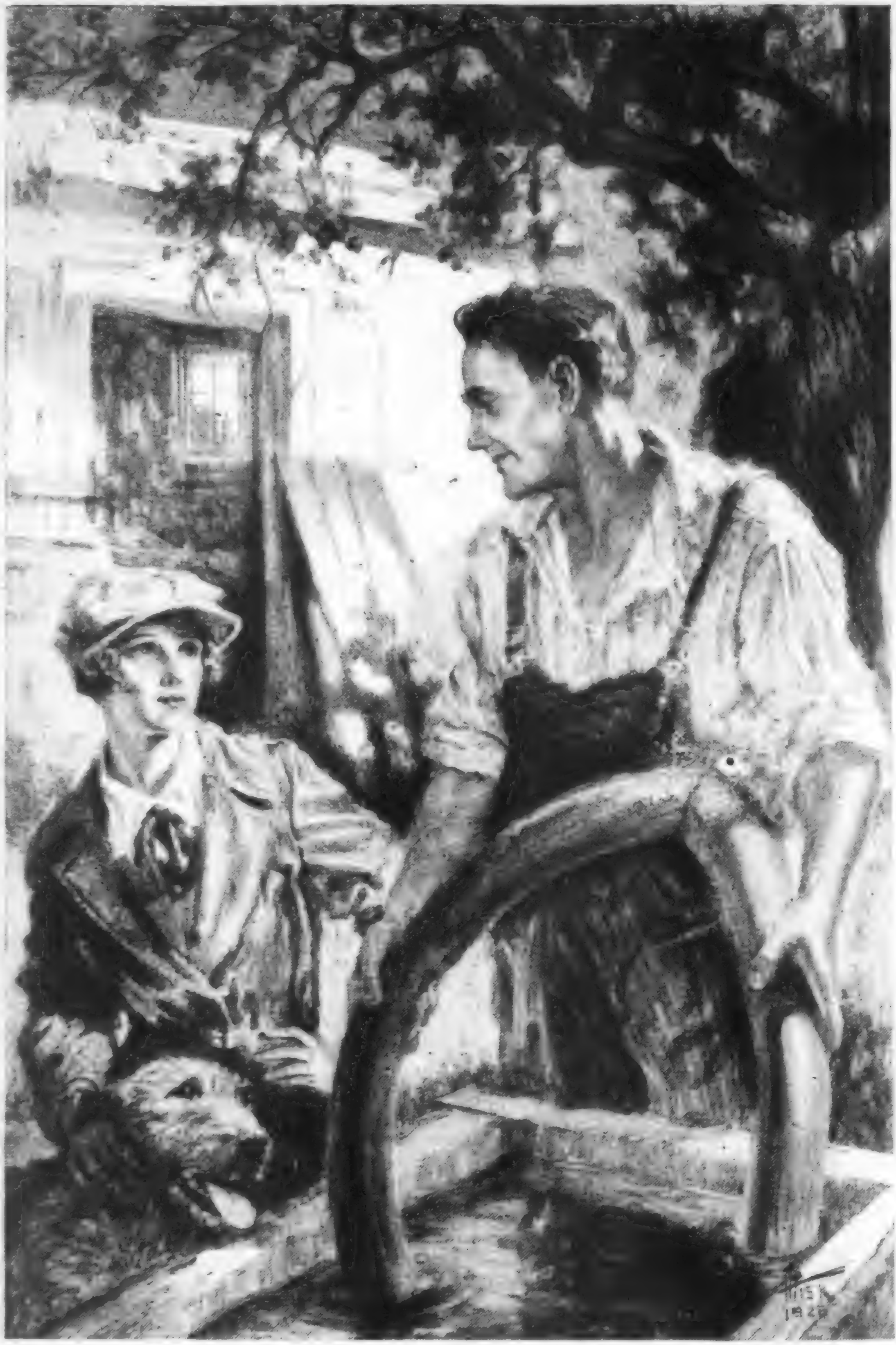
"Oh, in any off time," said I. "This evening. Just so long as Jim would let me have a car. Then you wouldn't have to pay extra for my time."

"Oh, that's all right," said she, and went away.

It's funny, but after a minute or two I almost felt as if my heart had stopped. One thing, I'm sure I was right about going slow with her. I was even wondering if she mightn't feel, when she'd had an hour to think it over, that I'd gone a little too fast. I couldn't afford to risk seeming fresh.

I told Jim about it, and he said all right, I could have his old flivver to run out there. Jim was always glad to oblige his customers. Later in the afternoon she called up and said to come ahead that evening. Jim talked with her, and told me. He kidded me some, too. Said she must like red hair. I was still so paralyzed I couldn't hand him back a thing. I just laughed, kind of, and gave Roddy a pat and turned away. I was thinking how funny it seemed to hear her say that name Watkins. Exactly like a man. But I knew that this Watkins was a girl. Probably Watkins called her Wood. Anyhow, I remembered how Henry Arbuckle had smiled when he spoke of Wood and Watkins. And I don't mind saying that all this was new stuff to me. I'm sure I had never seen anybody like her. I mean her perfectly natural offhand way. She fooled you at first into thinking you could talk to her like you'd talk to a man. But really she was a dainty little girl. You couldn't help think that she'd look lovely dressed up in pretty evening clothes. No, the more I thought it over that afternoon the less I could make it out. She was just a new kind. But I knew I'd have to step mighty careful to keep from talking in some wrong way. I mustn't seem to be interested, or get fooled into showing any personal interest. Even in the ducks. And I was awfully curious about them. Wood and Watkins.

WHEN I went home for supper I dressed up in my best suit. I did. She couldn't take that personally. Of course it was pretty foolish. It would get all out of



I was trembling with excitement, but I knew I would have to know her better, and wondered if I would ever have the chance.

press when I worked around on the ground. I took my jumpers along to pull over my clothes. I did have the sense to do that.

The place wasn't hard to find, just a right turn off the State highway by a filling station and then about half a mile on a narrow dirt road. There was a row of poultry sheds standing in gravel yards that sloped down to a pond. The house was just beyond, a little story-and-a-half country place with a neat yard and a portable garage out back. I could see all this plainly enough in the moonlight. There were lights in the down-stairs windows of the house and when I shut off the motor I could hear a Caruso record going. I stood for a moment beside the car kind of taking things in and breathing the sharp, pleasant October air. Roddy stood beside me, sniffing and cocking his ears and taking things in on his own account. What I felt mostly was peace, quiet and a neat, orderly feeling. For a moment I couldn't help wondering if this wasn't what I'd been looking for as well as my mother. I thought that. And then I wondered if those two girls, Wood and Watkins, lived here all by themselves. The place was away off, with woods all around. Those scrubby little oaks, you know, that are all over that part of Long Island. You'd have thought they'd be lonely. It occurred to me that maybe Watkins' mother lived with them, or somebody like that. I noticed telephone and light wires running up to the eaves from a tree, and thought I saw a radio aerial sticking up over the farther side of the roof, but couldn't be sure in that light.

There wasn't any front porch, only a couple of steps and a little pointed roof over a fanlight. I swung a brass knocker that was on the door. The music didn't stop, but after a minute or two the door opened and I saw Wood . . . Miss Wood . . . standing there in the light, still in the old knickerbockers but without the cap and the leather coat. She had a lot of hair that was mussed some and waved all round her head. She looked surprised at first and stared at me, but when I took off my hat and she saw my red head she smiled and wrinkled her nose and said, "Oh, come in!"

Well, I didn't know as I ought to do that. I hesitated, and felt self-conscious as the devil. I could see that she was taking in my good clothes. Oh, I was dressed all right! The door opened right into a big living-room. There was a big rug with a lot of color in it and colored cloths something like rugs hanging on the walls, and Japanese pictures and a long row of shelves that were stuffed with books. I mean that all the space between the top of each row of books and the shelf above was full of other books lined sideways. And I saw a long sofa and a couple of big upholstered chairs.

Well, I didn't budge until she said come in again, and then, feeling funny, almost a little scared, I stepped in over the threshold and kind of twisted my hat around in my hands. Honest, I felt like a boob. Then she saw Roddy and chirped to him and started right in rubbing his ears, kneeling down by him.

"This is the dog, Wattie," she said, and wrinkled her nose and wrestled the pup around. He loved it.

I saw then that the other girl was standing by the talking machine, and when I saw her I had a kind of shock. She wasn't an eighth of an inch taller than Wood—Miss Wood. And she was prettier. Or handsomer, or something, but not quite so fresh and simple. Looked a little more as if she wasn't born yesterday. She had on knickerbockers, too, and an awfully pretty sort of flowery waist that was open at the neck. Her hair was perfectly black and smooth, glossy black hair, bobbed and curling in toward her neck where it was cut off and curving forward into black points on her cheeks in front of her ears. Her skin was rather pale and very smooth. Her eyes were big and dark, with thin curving black brows over them. And she held a long green cigaret-holder in her slim little fingers with a lighted cigaret in it. Now I suppose I'm old fashioned about that, but it always gives me a funny jolt to see women smoke. It just does. I was glad that Miss Wood wasn't smoking. Though I thought maybe that didn't mean anything. She might have just finished a cigaret.

AND this little pair were the Wood and Watkins I'd heard about. No wonder Henry Arbuckle smiled. I pretty near laughed like a fool myself, just standing there twisting my hat and staring at them. They were so comically little! And they looked so sort of wise and natural and taking everything as a matter of course. I'll tell you right now, women beat me!

"He's come from up McIntosh's," explained Wood. She didn't seem to think of introducing me, but still she didn't treat me like a working man, not a bit more than she had down there at the garage in the afternoon. She just kind of took me for granted. Come to think of it, she didn't know my name. How could she have introduced me?

"My name is Burr," I said, feeling still more foolish. And then I wished I hadn't told it, because really why should they care a damn who I was? How could I be anything more to them than the man from McIntosh's?

The record stopped, and Watkins lifted it off the machine and laid it on a table. Then she took a careless puff or two of the cigaret and fixed those big dark eyes on me.

Wood was looking at me, too. At my face and then at my hair. I wondered in a kind of flutter what she could be thinking. She even drew her eyebrows down into a pucker as she studied me.

"I brought the vulcanizing outfit," said I. "Where do you want me to put it?"

"Oh, in the garage," said Watkins. She was looking through a book of records now.

"But I thought you were going to show us how to use it," said Wood, looking at my perfectly pressed suit.

"I am. Of course." And then I was foolish enough to look down at my clothes and kind of laugh. "I brought my jumpers."

"Oh," said she. "I was thinking you looked dressy for the part. Come along, Wattie, we've got to learn to be garage men."

She opened the door again. "You'll need your coats," said I, and then I guess I must have blushed some from the cool, rather interested, way Watkins eyed me, and Wood laughed. You see, I was getting more and more personal all the time that I was trying to tell myself I must just act and talk business. But how could I? They were so offhand about everything, and they were so thundering little! How could a fellow help kind of taking care of them?

Wood laughed some more. But they did put on their coats, and the three of us and Roddy went outside. I drove in back by the garage, and put on my jumpers and explained the thing to them. Watkins turned out to be even smarter than Wood. She asked keen, quick questions and was good with her hands.

When we were through with it, and I was wondering if I hadn't better say, "Well, I guess I'd better be going," Wood kind of hesitated and then Watkins spoke up. She was lighting a cigaret, hollowing her hands around the match like an old-timer. "You're going to show us how to put tires on, aren't you?" she asked.

I thought afterward maybe I took her up a little too quick on that. You see, I'd have jumped at any chance to stay. I'd never in my life felt quite like I felt then. Those two fascinating little things, with their knickerbockers and Watkins' cigarets, and their brisk direct ways and the neatness and sense of order about the place simply had me going. They did. I had never seen girls like them. They were as direct and as straight-out about things as any two men could have been. Not a bit of that nervous man and girl business in their air around us. They were practical. And yet all the time they were pretty and kind of absurd and most awfully good company. I was thinking all kinds of things, wondering who chaperoned them, because I hadn't seen or heard a sign of anybody else being around the place, and trying to believe that they really got up early mornings and did the work with their own hands and all that. I was pretty bewildered. Yes, they had me going all right, those two little devils. But maybe I'm saying too much about how I felt.

Well, anyway, I got the tire tools out of Jim's case, and showed them how to jack up a wheel with their own little emergency jack. They hadn't any idea of letting me do it, but got down on their knees on the concrete floor and went to it. Wood's hair kept getting down in her eyes, and she'd laugh and wrinkle her nose and push her hair back and duck right down there again. We got the tire off and took out the tube and deflated it. I explained how to find a leak by turning it slowly around in water, and how to put in blowout patches and all like that. When we had got the tube back in the casing, they insisted on doing the inflating themselves with the hand pump. They took turns at it, pumping away until their backs ached. But they got it up, all right, to where the gauge showed pressure enough, and then put it on the rim themselves. I just stood over and watched. Then Watkins asked some questions about the motor. So I took the hood off and showed them how to adjust the carbureter and some other things.

By this time it was after nine o'clock and I knew I just ought to go. There wasn't any excuse for staying. But I didn't want to go. I was having the time of my life. I'm afraid I was kind of slow about it, after I'd put the tools back in the car, because Wood looked at Watkins and then said:

"We usually make coffee about this time. You'd better come in and have some."

"Why," said I, "I don't know. I've never drunk coffee at night."

"Keep you awake?" asked Watkins.

"I don't know. I've had to be careful about such things."

"Why?"

I didn't know how to answer that. I didn't think they'd be particularly interested in my kind of thing. Fortunately we were walking up to the house by that time and it didn't seem necessary to say much of anything, so I just didn't answer.

WHEN we got inside, Watkins picked up a box that was painted in funny colors, yellow and green and blue, kind of Russian like, and asked if I'd have a cigaret. I explained that I didn't smoke, and she asked if it was too effeminate. I didn't know how to answer that. Then she stood right up in front of me on her two little feet and kind of laughed and asked, "What is all this, anyway? You're not trying to keep Lent in October, are you?"

They both laughed, and I got red and felt like a damn fool. Wood tried to help me out by saying that she just couldn't smoke. Made her sick.

"Oh, well," said Watkins, "you can at least sit down, can't you?"

I got my back up then, and said, "Yes, I'll do that," and did it. I felt a little queer doing it, because they were still on their feet, both of them, but you simply couldn't keep track of all the rules with that pair.

Watkins kept right after me. "Are you training for a fight?" she asked. "I love boxing. I saw a good deal of it while I was in New York."

"Oh, no," said I. . . . It was clear enough by now that I might as well come out with it, and I was thinking from the way they glanced at each other when Watkins asked if I was training for a fight that they might have heard some of the talk about me in the village and got it twisted. . . . "Oh no, but I was a ball player until I had an accident last May."

"What happened?" When she said this Watkins flopped down in a big chair by the table, sitting on her foot, and lighted another cigaret.

"Broke my leg."

"Oh, really!" cried Wood, who was sort of standing over me by now and pushing back her hair. "How dreadful!"

"Where did you play?" asked Watkins.

"Oh, I wasn't much. Just the Indiana State League."

"What position?"

"Shortstop. I had three years of that."

"Started pretty young, didn't you?"

"Seventeen."

"I love to watch Bancroft play."

That made me feel more at home, somehow. At least, whatever it was, I was beginning to get a little used to their funny ways. And I spoke right out, for the first time.

"You girls don't do all the work here yourselves, do you?"

"Oh, a lot of it," said Wood.

"You've never seen anything like the way ducks eat," put in Watkins. "It's enormous."

"We have an Italian by the day," said Wood. "He does the heavy work. And his wife helps with the dressing."

"I'm getting a little restless about the coffee, Woodie," said Watkins.

Wood backed off toward the kitchen door, but stopped to say, "There were three of us that went into the business originally. But Henderson deserted."

"Deserted?"

"Quit cold," said Watkins. "Got married."

"Oh, she got married."

Wood had got as far as the door now, but turned to say this, and it puzzled me completely, maybe because she was so little and looked so pretty and cuddly and lovable—"That's one thing I simply couldn't understand about Henderson." Then she popped out into the kitchen, and pretty soon I could smell the coffee.

"I wish I could ease off on this smoking," said Watkins.

"You want to quit?"

"No. I don't. I suppose that's the trouble. I just don't want to overdo it. I'm keeping off it now until after dinner. And I'm trying not to inhale."

"I suppose there's no reason why I shouldn't take it up," said I. "But I kind of got set the other way. Even the coffee, at this time of night, seems pretty wild to me."

"Think of being able to get a kick out of that?" called Watkins. And Wood answered from the kitchen, "Wonderful!"

It all felt so much like folks now that I asked Watkins how long she had been a farmer.

"My father was one," she explained. "We used to raise ducks and geese for the New York market, and turkeys. It's an old story to me. After I went to the Sargent School and then worked for three years, I got pretty far away from it. But it's familiar ground to me."

"What kind of work did you do?" No use talking, I was getting bolder and bolder.

"Oh, acting."

"Acting! On the stage?"

"On the stage. Where else?"

"And you gave that up to come out here into the woods."

"I did. Why not?"

"Oh, I don't know. I was just thinking—"

"I SHOULDN'T say it was much funnier than a league ball player working in the Little River garage. It's hard to see how you ever found the place. Far as the theater's concerned I got pretty completely disillusionized. At first I thought I could step right into Maude Adams' shoes, but there were difficulties. By the time you've put in the best part of two years making the rounds of the managers' offices and finding out that you haven't voice enough and you're not this and that, you become fed up. And even rehearsing for fifteen weeks in one season without pay isn't altogether a stimulating experience."

"Oh!" said I.

"Yes," said she. "Ducks are better."

"Do you find you can really make this pay?"

"Well," said she. . . . "Well." . . . She reached for a cigaret and twisted it into the holder.

"We hope to make it pay," said Wood in the kitchen.

"Pretty hard to get around the commission men."

"I suppose you have to deal through them."

"Unless you can build up a good direct trade with the big hotels."

"And it's pretty hard to break in there," said Wood, bringing in the tray.

It was awfully pleasant sitting there with them, drinking coffee and eating old-fashioned sugar cookies that Wood had made and talking and laughing over little things. Watkins put on some Paul Whiteman records, and I was crazy to suggest dancing, but they both looked so dainty and then just the three of us being alone there it seemed a little too personal.

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She's an Automotive Engineer

A girl who always liked to play with machinery was undaunted by the fact that her chosen profession was closed to women. As soon as she could create an opportunity, Ethel Bailey made good in a highly technical special field

by Edna Yost

ON A sunny morning in July, 1925, a distinguished group of women took their places on the platform of one of the assembly halls at the Wembley Exhibition grounds, England, to open formally the First International Conference of Women in Science, Industry and Commerce. Two among them were conspicuous for their youth: one, Her Royal Highness the Duchess of York; the other, a State o' Maine American girl, Ethel H. Bailey.

"TODAY engineering is one of the fields where a so-called feminine point of view is much needed," says Miss Bailey. "While the technical man is just as human as any other, he is likely to become so interested in technicalities that he loses sight, at times, of the human element. Efficiency has been such a watchword among engineers that too often their idea is production—and then more production. "Miss Bailey thinks the average woman will never look at business or engineering in that way because her instinctive urge to protect the race colors her viewpoint.

The Duchess of York, girlishly sincere in the appreciation of her privilege as president, expressed with simplicity her welcome to the delegates, especially to "those who have come from overseas to be with us today." A few moments later America's representative was called upon to respond to Her Royal Highness's welcome.

A slender figure becomingly gowned in white crêpe de Chine crossed to the center of the platform. Youth was in her springing step. Youth was in her face. And from her first eager words the audience was aware that youth was in Ethel Bailey's spirit, too. From this amazingly young person came greetings to her British sisters from three of the most learned technical societies of America: the Society of Automotive Engineers, of which she is the only woman full member; the American Society for Steel Treating, of which she is also a full member; and the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

There is no use in being squeamish about Ethel Bailey's age. In "Who's Who in Engineering," topping a long list of technical positions held and work performed, you will find a simple statement to the effect that she was born in Houlton, Maine, on August 18, 1896. Which made her not quite twenty-nine years of age when she was chosen to represent the women's engineering profession of America at the Wembley Conference. She was the only American woman to address the Conference, and her paper on "Automotive Research" featured one of the technical sessions.

"At first they couldn't get over the fact that I was younger than the other engineers," she said in speaking of her experience, "but that was because they had forgotten for the moment that engineering as a profession for women is much younger in this country than it is in England.

"Why am I an engineer?" she repeated. "The instinct for it came before I was old enough to think of it as being unusual. I cannot remember the time when I was not interested in mechanical things. If I had been a boy it would have been evident from the beginning that I'd be an engineer. But being a girl—and with a good, old New England family and tradition back of me—it was not so evident. I was always crazy about motors. When I was a youngster I used to spend vacations at my uncle's camp where there were sure to be some young engineering students and motor-boats. I learned a lot about engines from them—all they could teach me. And the more I knew the more I wanted to know.

"We moved to Portland when I was eleven and the Attorney-General of the State was our friend and neighbor. He had a car. We hadn't. I wanted to drive. He had enough confidence in me to let me learn on his car. When I was thirteen he helped me get my first driver's license. I've had one ever since.

"Soon I was beginning to plan definitely on what I was going to do when I had finished high school. I had made up my mind that I was

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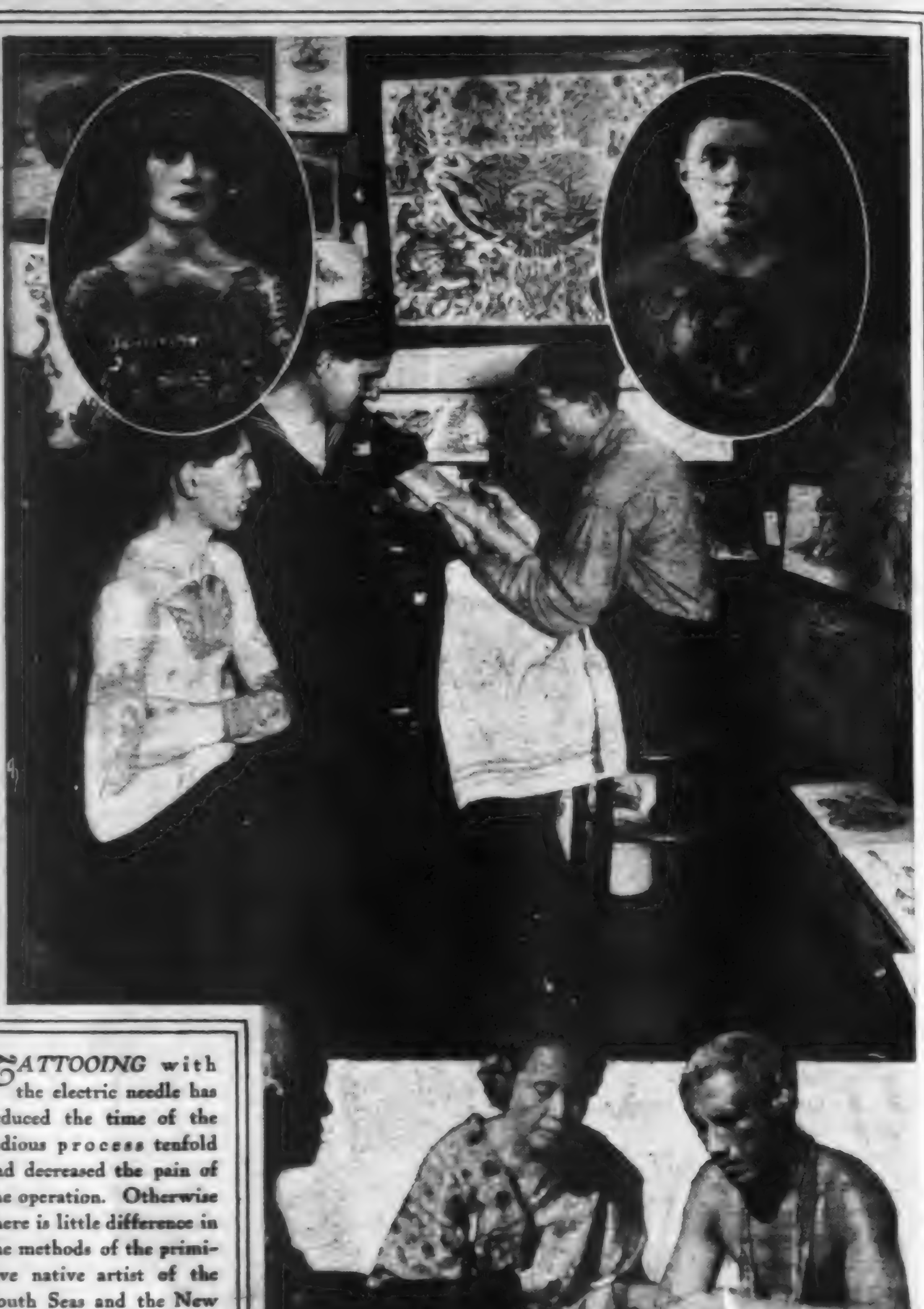
THE stern father who once emphatically said "No" to Ethel Bailey's ambition to study engineering fortunately relented. From her home in Houlton, Maine, she went west to get technical training, enlisted in the Signal Corps, became an expert in the construction and repair of gas engines, and tested aircraft motors during the war. At thirty Miss Bailey is Research Engineer for the Society of Automobile Engineers and the only woman member of several of the most important technical societies at home and abroad.



TATTOOING with the electric needle has reduced the time of the tedious process tenfold and decreased the pain of the operation. Otherwise there is little difference in the methods of the primitive native artist of the South Seas and the New York "professor" whose masterpieces of human decorative art are illustrated in the oval insets. The young Samoan at the right is suffering a tortuous tattooing process that signalizes his growth to manhood.

Their Beauty Is Only Skin Deep

Curious tastes in personal adornment are reflected in the strange devices and decorations that some people have indelibly inked into their skins. Veteran practitioners of the tattooing craft indulge the whims of eccentric patrons

by Jay Murphy

NOWADAYS your skilful tattoo artist is no longer limited to the embellishment of a brawny arm with blue anchors or a vividly colored pair of initialed hearts. Women patrons in increasing numbers seek him out for permanent complexions of vegetable dyes that defy time and the elements. Cherry-hued lips can be supplied while you wait and plucked eyebrows replaced with beautifully arched substitutes.

ACCORDING to the tattooing fraternity, there are countless phases to the art the untutored never even suspect.

"Why," revealed Professor (by courtesy) Billy Donnelly, the while he sprayed a serpent into the knotted forearm of a Marine in his narrow shop on salty Sands Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., "I have an old gent comes in here, and all he wants me to do is drill him with the electric needles around the joints. He claims the vibration and the lettin' of blood loosens the congestion there and relieves his rheumatics.

"Some years ago," he grinned, "a sickly lookin' bird drops in and has me tattoo his will of some nine hundred words on his back."

Rumor that will not down has it that members of the fair sex have been getting complexions in the tattoo studios. When taxed as to its truth, Donnelly replied without hesitation, "I hope to tell you they are.

"You see," he explained, "not long ago a British chemist experimented until he invented a white ink that would stand out after it was stamped in the flesh. The tattoo boys weren't long discoverin' that this fluid, combined with other colors, would give various complexions. When this got noised around, some of the girls began takin' a 'Brodie' by lettin' us give 'em rosy cheeks. Now, I don't mean by that they're attended with jazz bands. You know, it's a personal matter, so most of 'em naturally want to keep it dark.

"And this isn't all," boasted our ink-and-needle votary. "We're givin' 'em cherry lips and supplyin' many whose eyebrows have been plucked out with beautiful arched substitutes."

Donnelly had branched out into beauty work considerably before most of his rivals. At the beginning of the World War the wife of a Canadian officer sent for him to tattoo the badge of her husband's regiment on her shoulder. As the design progressed, the crimson he was using caught her admiration and it occurred to her that Donnelly might be able to transfer the captivating hue to her cheeks with artful effect. He was so confident he could that she consented to risk the experiment. Fortunately, it was an artistic success.

Women, be it known, are not the only ones who seek personal improvement at the hands of the body decorators. Recently Donnelly had a substantial, cultured man request that his gums be reddened. The stranger was advised that, due to the especial tenderness of the gums, considerable pain would be entailed. Furthermore, it was pointed out that the needles probably would be broken by contact with the teeth. These contingencies failed to discourage the patron, who remarked that he would stand the torture and pay well for any damage to instruments. Donnelly worked for five continuous hours on the patient's upper jaw. Several weeks later the lower mouth and lips were treated. The only way Donnelly could explain the queer case was that the man was suffering from anemia and pride had urged him to mask the condition.

On another occasion a man whose hair was rather sparse sought out Donnelly. He desired, it appears, to look as if he had a thick hirsute crop, so he instructed Donnelly to tattoo the bare spaces the color of his hair, and then, with the remaining locks falling over the treated parts, it seemed as if he had an abundant growth.

In at least one particular Donnelly maintains that the tattoo artists can improve upon the alterations of the plastic surgeons. To illustrate, he related the experience of a young woman whose mouth was lifted in such a way that a scar remained at each corner. The girl began to grow distressed because these blemishes marred what had been a pretty face. A patron who had Donnelly treat a facial imperfection persuaded her to let the tattoo man attempt to remedy the weakness. As a result, through an ingenious application of red pigment the mortifying situation was banished.

During the early days of the late hostilities Donnelly had a studio in "the ditches" of Southampton. Patriotic emblems were in highest favor then, with sentimental second and religious next. The tattooers there were of no small assistance to the British Intelligence Office tracing deserters, spies and other offenders against the Crown. Having studied tattooing processes in every quarter of the globe, Donnelly has become quite expert in determining where and by whom a pattern was executed. Hence in those parlous times the English authorities frequently appealed to him for aid in criminal matters. One day two Scotland Yard operatives with a suspect handcuffed to them entered his little place. The detectives said that the prisoner swore he was a Russian and that some tattooing on his person had been done there. They asked Donnelly to try to establish the truth or falsity of this statement. After a careful examination of the marks, Donnelly declared them the work of a certain extraordinarily gifted artist in Hamburg. The captive admitted that Donnelly's conclusion was correct, but that, though born in Germany, he later became a subject of the Czar. Investigation by British Secret agents in Germany, however, disclosed enough evidence to the contrary to convict the suspect as a spy.

Moana of the South Seas

LATER in the conflict Donnelly was an oiler on the *Olympic* and other ships engaged in the transportation of troops from Canada to the other side. Between regular duties he tattooed practically every member of the various outfits from the colonels down. Practically all the officers (as in most other Allied Armies) were either Masons or Knights of Columbus, so on most of these Donnelly fashioned the insignias of their respective fraternal orders. Others insisted on the maple leaf, while most of the lads of the Irish battalions were loyal to the little green shamrock. In many instances tattoo marks played a useful and merciful part in the war, serving to identify many a poor slain youth whose identification tag had become mutilated or lost

As a matter of fact the war caused a great many people of the type that would never ordinarily dream of letting themselves be tattooed, to have it done. He would be a brave man indeed who would reassert in a gathering of veterans the statement so frequently made by criminologists from Lombroso down that tattooing is one of the distinguishing marks of the criminal class. It is probably true that soldiers during the war were actuated by the same motive that makes tattooing still so popular among sailors, namely, the vague idea that it might serve to identify their bodies in case of accident. This is also one of the explanations advanced by ethnologists for the way in which so many barbaric peoples the world over mark their skins.

Donnelly is a quaint character with an infectious chuckle and a comprehensive brogue whimsically blended with New Yorkese. Born in Dublin, at the age of twelve he ran away from home and shipped on the *Star of England*, a square-rigger bound for Cape Town. An aged fo'castle hand took a fancy to the adventurous boy and schooled him in the rudiments of tattooing.

On one of his cruises Donnelly ventured into the interior of New Zealand to see whether the medicine men of the Maori tribes had anything new to teach him in the way of tattoo tricks. He was disappointed to learn the contrary. They still primitively used sea shells, edged on stones, to prepare the flesh for the reception of the outlines and colors, which were derived from native raw mixtures.

While on shore leave in a South American port, Donnelly wandered into the village of some Peruvian Indians and tattooed several with elaborate, parti-colored figures. So overjoyed was the tribe with the strange art that Donnelly was recklessly reimbursed in good old English gold and implored to remain there for the rest of his days, wielding the painful, antique hand needles.

Once when this little ex-sailorman's ship dropped anchor off the African Gold Coast, Donnelly and a few companions stole ashore in the native skin boats made fast alongside while their black owners were peddling wares to the crew. The moment Donnelly and the other tars landed, the naked populace spied the tattoo work on their bare arms and clamored to be similarly adorned. They offered to pay handsomely in whisky, game, trinkets and other commodities. Donnelly selected the towering chief as the victim of his labors. With this dignitary sprawled prone on his great back and Donnelly a-stride his middle, while attendants pinned down his arms, head and legs, a rippling Union Jack was pressed into his dusky chest. As the agony continued, more and more perspiration was forced from the chieftain, but he stuck it out magnificiently until the ordeal was ended, at which, forgetting about his late purgatory, he strutted self-consciously in and out among his worshiping satellites.

The itinerant Donnelly says that tattooing is dying out among the Polynesian peoples. This group is comprised of the natives of the South Sea Islands, Hawaii, Cook Islands and the Marquesas. Few Hawaiians are tattooed any more, while only the older Maoris of New Zealand bear the dye. As some of them are likely to succumb and others suffer ill health for many years through the crude tattooing methods the Samoan youths are inclined to shy away from the torture, especially as the custom is prohibited in many places there nowadays. Any one who has seen the motion-picture "Moana of the South Seas" can realize the suffering such tattooing entails. However, even in the restricted zones it will doubtless continue to obtain, for the dusky belles regard the tattoo as the stamp of manhood. A Samoan in his early teens, if tattooed, is considered a man by the opposite sex, while an old male, untouched by the needle, is contemptuously referred to as a boy. Some of the Samoan girls themselves are tattooed from six inches above to the same distance below the knees, while many of the young bloods are marked from a fantastic border at the waistline to the knees. Sharks' teeth, ground to a saw-like edge, and the juices of herbs and fruits are the principal mediums employed by the South Sea Islanders. The homely implement is jammed through the epidermis numberless times, often requiring a year of excruciating treatments before the solid hue is secured. The Marquesans and the Maoris are the only insular Pacific tribes that boast tattooed faces. The former are solidly pricked, weird stripes, flourishes and circles of gay colors being the favorite scheme.

The "professor" is prepared to execute designs in one or more colors for a fee ranging from twenty-five cents to a hundred dollars. Freehand work comes high, but for the less fastidious there are stock designs that can be transferred with tracing paper or a celluloid stencil.

After participating in the Boer War, Donnelly earned a livelihood for years supplying professional services to the members of the big-top side shows. It was then that Donnelly was one of many artists who did extensive decoration on the body of George P. Coles, probably the most tattooed person alive. Only a short while ago Donnelly completed the collective job by adding Gaelic scroll work from the ankles to the toes.

A few doors from Donnelly, Jim Wilson, another veteran of the art, had some interesting contributions to make.

"I learned the tricks of the trade," he recalled, "as a member of the Scotch Guards stationed in the London Tower. Tom Riley, the daddy of all the white tattooers, had a studio there and taught me the ropes. It was this same Riley who went to Paris to tattoo the celebrated Clara Ward. There were a few others in those palmy days, includin' Dr. Sutherland McDonald, whose work was a treat to any eye. None of us, though, can ever hope to equal the skill and intricacy of pattern of the Orientals. Them yellow men are the real Rembrandts of the game."

Many members of royal households, declared the critical Wilson, are, from the tattoo standpoint at least, sisters and brothers under the skin with the lowly sailor and soldier.

"Many's the Lord and Countess and leader of high society I've marked," he swelled. "Most of 'em were strong for the coat of arms, and one Duchess, I remember, 'ad me put a tiny rooster on her left ankle." If you look sufficiently impressed and willing to believe more, he will add:

"Why, King George himself has a bright Chinese dragon on one of his arms, and the Prince of Wales is tattooed, too." Laugh that one off!

People in liveried cars often drive up to Wilson's modest quarters, so he says, to have the effect of prominent scars softened by cunning manipulation of the electric needle. This part of the business represents confidential relations, because patrons of this type do not want their identity to get abroad.

Wilson related the curious case of a father and daughter who were shipwrecked on a lonely island. The parent was affluent and wanted the girl, if she survived him, to receive his entire fortune. So with shells and the blood of cuttlefish, which turns black the instant it becomes devitalized, he tattooed a will to that effect on her back and signed the odd document.

During the Brussels Exposition Wilson had a stall there and a booth at the Earl's Court Exhibition, in London. When Queen Victoria passed away, he was a staff orderly in the London Tower.

Wilson observed that tattoo work is largely influenced by peculiar popular waves. In war days Red Cross nurses were in lively demand as skin decorative figures. Since our ships have returned from the Australian junket, due to the warm antipodal hospitality accorded the crews, the tattoo instruments have been particularly busy on our husky tars with reproductions of kangaroos.

Permanent Complexions

AT 69 Sands Street we encountered Jack Redcloud, who lately deserted the Cardiff Giants and the "What-Is-Its" to join forces with "Texas Bob" Wicks, one of the rising youths of the profession.

"Thanks to the one-piece bathin' suits and the rolled stockin's," enthused Redcloud, in the absence of his talented partner, "we're doin' a land office trade. The flappers come in here to have their knees and backs decorated. Rose O'Neill's kewpies, butterflies and other dainty designs are in highest favor with 'em."

Incidentally, he added by way of compliment, the "girls" have more courage under the drill than the men. The latter usually light cigarets to buck up their nerve, but most of the fair customers bear the pain without resorting to that popular anesthetic.

Redcloud recalled a crook, Jacobus Van Dyne, who renounced his lawless life for a girl. Afterward, while penniless and starving, he had a bitter fight against temptation, but finally triumphed. To remind him of his noble moral victory and give him strength of will for other mental crises, he had an Egyptian tattooist who flourished on the Liverpool waterfront brand his forehead with an incongruous group—two spiders and a butterfly!

Asked if they were receiving any requests for beauty treatments, Redcloud replied, "Yes, some of the dames are droppin' in to have their lips and cheeks done.

"And why shouldn't they?" he argued. "They're spendin' all kinds of 'jack' elsewhere to improve on Nature—experimentin' with this and that and sendin' agents all over the world to try and turn up new beauty secrets—so why shouldn't they take a flyer on us? The Board of Health inspects our places regular, and we certainly can't do the damage many of them plastic birds pull off."

Over in a corner of a barber shop in Chatham Square, on the Bowery, where the bumper local crop of black eyes is adroitly disguised, we surprised the dean of them all, Charley Wagner, in the act of limning a monster that must have been conceived in the brain of a Poe on the right thigh of Emily Davis, a flapper adjunct of the "queer people" tents.

You couldn't help thinking at once of the famous war song that was imported to the trenches, probably by Australians, and was sung so often by Tommies and Yanks and Anzacs. It was called the "Tattooed Lady," was shouted to the air of "My Home in Tennessee," and ran something like this:

"Hi'd give the world ter see
Thet Scotch tattooed lydee;
She wos a sight ter see,
Tattooed from 'ead ter knee.
Orl raound 'er jawr
Wos the Royal Flyin' Corps,
And acrorst 'er back
The Union Jack
And other flags galore.

"Orl up and down 'er spine
The 'Orse Guards marched in line,
And orl raound 'er 'ips
Wos a row of battleships,
And on 'er left kidney
Wos a bird's-eye view of Sydney;
But wot I liked best
Right acrorst 'er chest
Wos me 'ome in Tennessee."

"Do we get any requests for poimanent complexions?" repeated Charley. "I'll say we do. A 'broad' (Bowery for woman) wuz the foist one that tackled me. It wuz just after the bobbed hair craze had 'wised' the dames up to how much time they could save by havin' 'em cut. She comes in an' says she wants poimanent red cheeks an' lips. When I ast her what put the idea in her noodle, she explained she wuz in the boilesque racket, an' figured it would save her no end of time an' trouble-makin' up ev'ry day.

"Since then," he confided, "we've had quite a few of the neighbor's children slippin' in for the same treatment.

"Yes, an' if they get tired of the make-up, we kin remove it, too, by a wrinkle I loined in a curious way," he said. "A gent who wuz studyin' for a saw-bones up to Fordham Univoisity drops in one day an' wants me to help him dope out a scheme that'll remove tattooin'.

Western tattoo artists despair at achieving the intricate scroll work and exquisite color effects of Oriental artists. The important ceremony of initiation into manhood, illustrated from "Moana," is a semi-religious rite in which the young man's whole family participates. The youth must resolutely bear hours of agony under the old-fashioned hand needle before he can be accounted a full-fledged male tribesman.

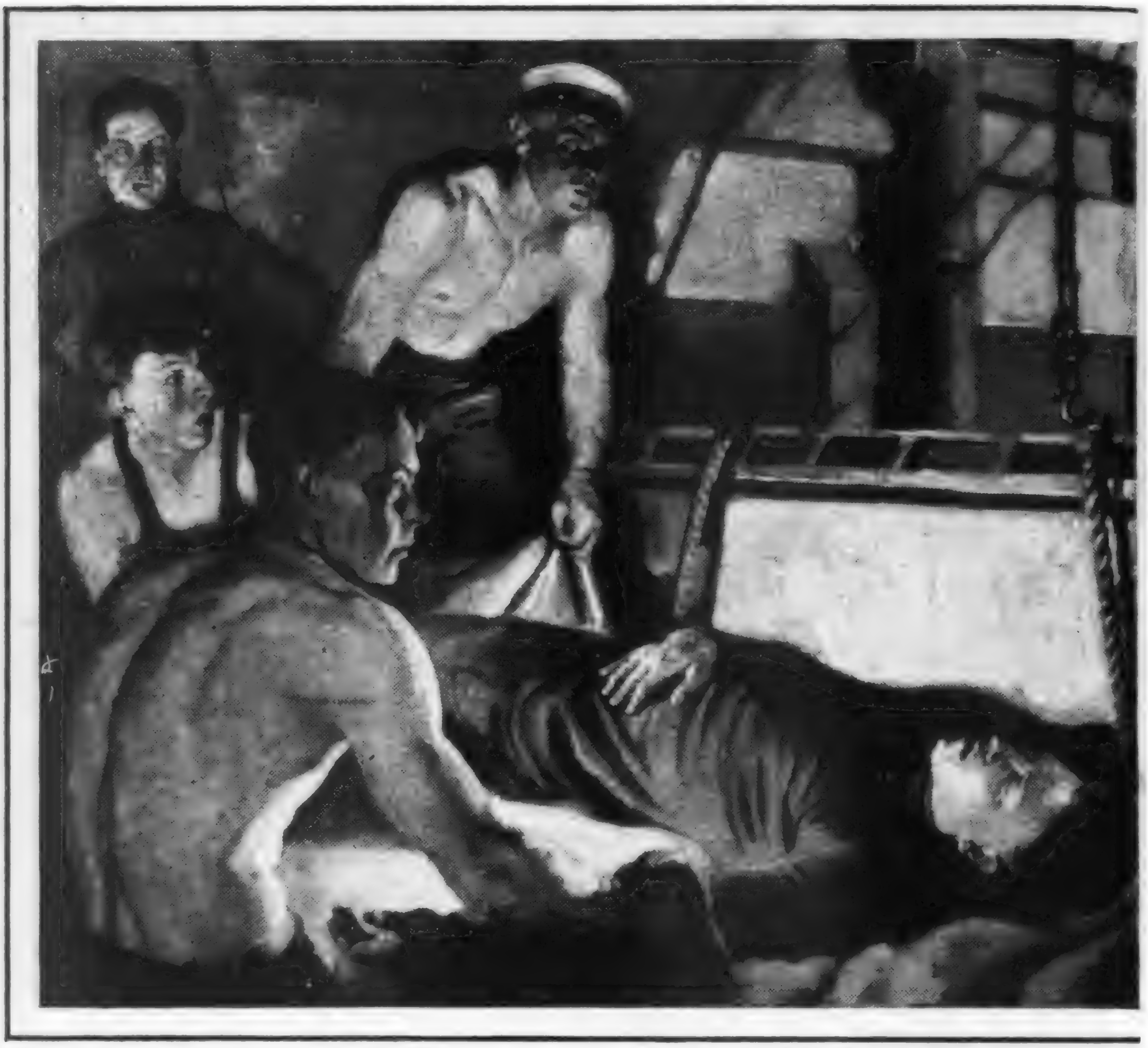
When he wuz a kid, it seems, he got himself well marked up. But now he wuz anxious to have it removed—said it didn't look dignified for a doctor. Well, he fooled aroun' diff'rent acids until he finally struck one that'd do the trick. At odd times after that, for a coupla years, I shot this juice into him until all traces had disappeared."

"We are ast to do jobs," contributed the voluble Wagner, "the gen'ral public never dreams of. A guy from Staten Island wuz in here on'y the other day to have some blooded hounds branded with a coitain mark under their forelegs. He tol' me he had one swiped an' t'ought this wuz a good way to eyedentify the rest, in case some one grabbed any of 'em an' put up a holler that the dogs wuz theirs.

As we were being regaled with all these statistics and reminiscences, an adolescent Italian came in and bade "Silver Joe," Wagner's assistant, tattoo a heart, a-drip with blood, on his arm. At its completion, he directed that "Marie" be added.

Joe cynically and unerringly guided the humming, throbbing needles through the characters in question.

"Huh," he sneered, after the sentimental one had departed, "them kids gimme a laugh. The chances are he'll have a row with the dame and be back to have her monicker shaded out and some other skirt's inked in."



The captain looked round on the silent, white-

JUDGMENT

The story of two men, a woman

HE MET her on the little village main street, where the solitary high electric globe shed sickly light on the dusty sidewalk. He was walking slowly, head bent, and did not at first recognize the woman who brushed nervously by him. Then he stopped and lifted the blue peaked sailor's cap from his head.

"Claire," he whispered and the world seemed to hang in space and wait. The woman turned. Her eyes were starry in the violet dusk. A dog whined among the purple shadows under the trees. Down the street a man laughed. Somewhere out in the bay a tug whistled, shrilly and long.

She said "Joe" in a low voice. They drew nearer and were silent again. The woman's white fingers played at her throat. Her lips quivered. The light overhead glinted on a gold ring. The man grinned, without humor.

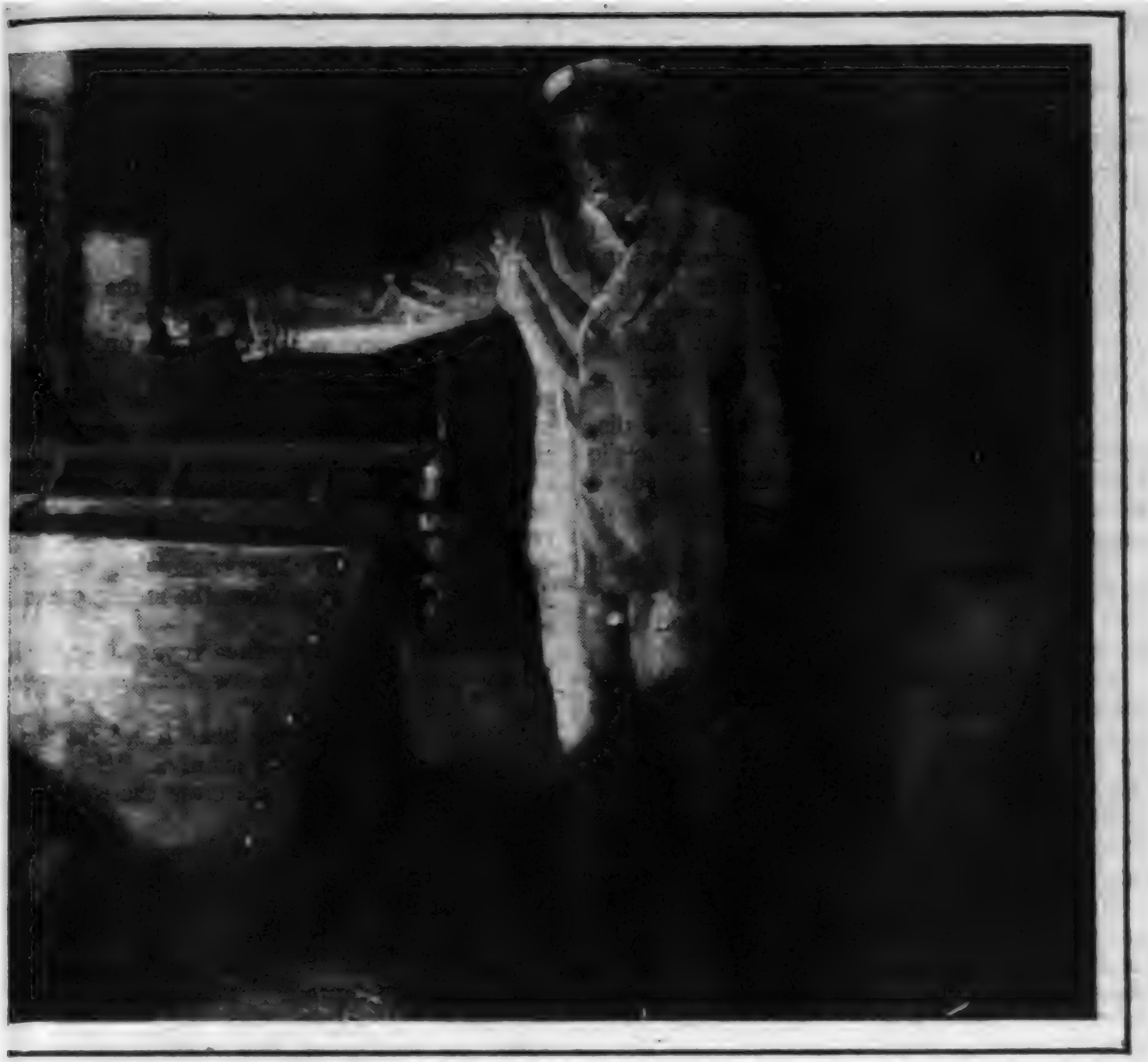
"I heard you're married," he said.

She whispered "Yes," and spoke no more until the dog in the purple shadows had whined again and was still. "Two years ago."

"You married Harry Carstairs?"

"I'm sorry, Joe . . . I waited for a year. Mother was in debt and Harry's father . . ."

"I know." The man smiled grimly. "Harry's



faced crew. "You men replace those hatches."

By

Albert Richard Wetjen

Illustrated by
John R. Peirce

and the relentless sea

father would see his son get what he wanted, even my woman. . . . I was wrecked in the Banda Sea and couldn't get home."

"We heard you were dead. I knew something was wrong but . . . I'm glad to see you, Joe."

"You're happy now?"

There was silence again. He thought he could see dim tears streaking down the drawn face. He did not need an answer. The woman's fingers twisted at her throat again. He had heard in the village since coming home how Harry abused her, how sad she was, never singing as had been her wont.

He touched her with a shaking hand. Her fingers groped for his, squeezed them. They knew, in that instant, that laughter was still theirs but for that narrow band of gold. The dog was whining again in the purple shadows, changing black now. Some one was coming along the sidewalk.

"Nothin' to stay for," the man muttered. "I'll go away on the *Mayfair* in the morning. . . . They offered me bos'n's job. . . . May come back later. . . . Good-by."

She said "Good-by" in a flat voice. She turned and ran into the mistiness of the growing night. The man cursed and stared at the young stars. Three years ago she had been his, promised to him. They were to have been married after one last voyage. Then shipwreck and the delay. Harry had her, Harry the thin-voiced, the son of the shipowner. The sailor rocked down the street to the water front. Time ached on. . . .

There was no reason why Harry should not be mate of the *Mayfair*. His father owned the ship. But Joe wished many times he had thought before taking this long voyage to Japan. It was too late now to back out, though. They had his name on the articles and the *Mayfair* was three days at sea.

The morning of sailing the men had discovered each other, jarred. On the foc's'le head, hauling in the lines as the ship edged from the dockside, the port watch had heard sarcasm come from mate to bos'n.

"Don't stand around, bos'n," Harry had said in his mean voice. "Don't stand around and look at me. Get to work and lay on that hawser."

Joe had been coiling up a heaving line and there were plenty of men laying back on the heavy bread-rope. Besides, it was not too good for discipline for a bos'n to be called down before the men. Joe had flushed and answered not a word, staring at the mate with savage eyes. This man had bought his woman, forced her into marriage and now was tired of her.

Harry knew. He knew and he enjoyed the knowledge, tasting it, plumbing it as a drinker might taste and plumb the bouquet of old wine. He stood with his hands on his hips, his legs astride and with deep lines creasing his face into a sneer.

"Don't like me, do you?" he said. "Sore at me because I got your girl. Well, I'll train her well and then maybe turn her over." It was as much as the bos'n could do not to hit him. The port watch worked in uncomfortable silence, aware of a growing dislike for the mate, some of them understanding the sneer, because they came from the same town as the two jarring men.

Once at sea it was easier for Joe to keep out of the mate's way. But there were times when meeting was unavoidable. In the morning he had to go to the sour man for orders as to the day's work. In the evening he had to go over the long report to be made. And throughout the day the mate would walk around finding fault, reporting sometimes to the captain that his bos'n was incompetent.

THERE were times when Joe could have choked his superior with as little compunction as he would have choked a rat. But the discipline of the sea was ingrained and somehow, vaguely, he had faith that the sea would straighten out the matter for him. He had seen before so many men weeded out, unfit, cracking under strain. And the mate of the *Mayfair* was not a competent officer. He was careless and the sea tolerates no slighting of its strength. The whole ship knew that Harry Carstairs was mate by virtue of his father's power. He had not had his papers a year yet and in the order of things should have served a long voyage as junior officer before stepping to higher commands.

With a good bos'n, like Joe, a mate's carelessness did not matter very much.

But there were occasions when orders were countermanded by the officer for the sheer pleasure of humiliating a fine sailor. Such an occasion was the countermanded order about life-boat falls.

The rope needed changing in the blocks of one of the poop boats. It was rotten to the core and cracked alarmingly whenever strain was put upon it. Without consulting the mate, Joe brought new rope from the storeroom and started reeving it off.

"The falls will do another voyage," snapped Harry Carstairs when he saw what was happening. "Ask me in future."

"They won't hold the boat if we let them go," answered the bos'n grimly. "If we had to lower away with a full crew there'd be an accident."

"Don't tell me what to do."

So the matter was dropped and the new rope was taken back to the storeroom. Once Joe decided to go over the mate's head. The safety of the men was involved in weak boat falls. But the captain wanted to keep his job and Harry Carstairs was the owner's son. There was no crossing him. Time and the sea must settle the thing. But whenever Joe thought of Claire in the little village, sad and silent, waiting for this man to come back to her, insult her and beat her, he wanted to take the law in his own hands. A short time afterward as they were hoisting the poop boat to paint it underneath a fall gave way and crushed a man.

THE *Mayfair* reached Japan and swung in globes burning and her decks a chaos of coolies. The winches rattled continuously. Slingload after slingload of cargo came up from the holds, swung over the rail and was dropped down into the waiting scows. There was no let-up. For four days the *Mayfair* lay inert while men swarmed over her, chattering, laboring. And on the night of the fourth day the cargo was all unloaded.

Joe was sitting on the bitts near the port foreshrouds when the last of the coolies left. An able seaman came to him and said, "Did you know they hadn't put the hatches on, bos'n?"

The bos'n rose and followed the seaman down to the 'tween decks and stopped by number-two hold, almost under the bridge. In the sickly light from the electric globes the hatch gaped open and black, reaching down for thirty or forty feet clear to a steel deck. The wooden hatches were piled carelessly to one side. A white-jacketed steward was peering into the void.

He called to the bos'n, "Some one's liable to get hurt. A lot of the boys cross over that hatch to get to their rooms."

The bos'n nodded and frowned. The rooms the stewards occupied were on each side of the hatch, their doors opening onto a narrow alley. It was the habit of the men to cross the hatch as the shortest way to some other cabin. And with the hatches off some one would be likely to fall down. The mate was responsible for the hatches. He should have been on the job to see that the coolie stevedores replaced them before quitting the ship.

Joe went midships and entered the saloon. He approached the mate's cabin and heard a woman laugh, a little tinkling sound, like that of a giggling child. He leaned against a bulkhead, weak and sick understanding. And Claire was this man's wife—Harry's wife. And he was entertaining women from off-shore, painted dolls from the quarter. He roused himself and knocked on the door.

Laughter ceased. Some one cursed inside and then the mate opened the door a little way. The bos'n caught a glimpse of a bare arm and shoulder. Then the mate blocked the view and snarled, "What d'you want?"

"The hatches are off number two hold, below decks, sir," said the bos'n.

The mate scowled. "I'll see to it in the morning."

"But the stewards live down there, and it's likely that some one will fall."

"I'll be along after a while." The door slammed and the bolt slid home. The bos'n stood still for a moment and thought. Perhaps he should have the hatches covered. But the seamen were off watch and there would be a lot of grumbling if he disturbed them to start work again. The stewards ought to cover the hatches for their own safety but who ever saw a steward do any work outside of his own province? After all, the mate was responsible. The men would obey the mate.

IT WAS an hour later when the mate came for'ard. He had, as a matter of fact, forgotten all about the hatches. He wanted to find the saloon steward and procure liquor from the locked storeroom below the saloon pantry.

He went down the fo'c's'le companionway and turned into the alley that led into the 'tween decks where the stewards' cabins were. Only one electric globe was burning. There was not much to be seen in the sickly dim glow. And the mate was in a hurry, anxious to get back to his room with the liquor keys. He started to cross the hatch as the custom was, making a short cut instead of following the narrow alleyway round the square of the hatch combings. He screamed once.

A steward heard his moaning on the steel floor thirty or forty feet below, and ran for help. Other lights switched on, electric clusters were brought.

The captain stood there, beside the winch drum, biting his lips and frowning. The bos'n had just completed his explanation as to the reason there were no hatches over the hold. Then the shattered mate came to view and quick hands steered his rough stretcher away from the combing and the winch dropped it lightly to the deck planking. The captain bent over the injured man.

[*Continued on page 174*]

Prize Contest Awards

IN THE June issue of EVERYBODY'S there appeared an announcement of a prize contest for the best letter from a reader commenting on any non-fiction story that had appeared in the magazine in the course of the past year.

The following prizes were awarded in accordance with the terms of the contest: First Prize ($50.00), Mrs. F. C. Burnham, Fresno, California; Second Prize ($25.00), Paul G. Thomas, 4203 West Walker Street, Seattle, Washington; Third Prize ($15.00), Lloyd E. Klinger, R. D. No. 1, Collegeville, Pennsylvania.

Mrs. Burnham's choice was the story of Mrs. Fannie Riggs of St. Louis, who built up a nation-wide baking business at the age of sixty-two ("It Started With a Sandwich," by Caralee Strock, August, 1925). Mr. Thomas was impressed by the story of Dr. Frank Loope of Seattle, a bed-ridden invalid who devotes his time to bringing cheer into the lives of other shut-ins ("A Doctor of Inspiration," by William C. Lyon, March, 1926). Mr. Klinger's choice was the story of Sherman Fairchild, a wealthy young inventor who has perfected aerial photography ("His Father's Money Did Not Hurt Him," by Samuel Taylor Moore, February, 1926).

They Climbed Together

Side by side in their combined home and workshop the Ackleys have become famous in distinct and separate fields. Floyd Ackley makes jewelry. Edith Flack Ackley has won recognition for her original and captivating marionettes

by Nina Purdy

COOPERATION with the Ackleys is not confined to their professions. They carry it into their domestic tasks and into their sports. They both cook, and whoever is the least busy gets the family meals. They spend entire summers together at their favorite diversion, cruising, and their seven-year-old daughter, Telka, has been trained to take an active part in all the family activities, whether work or play.

A FEW houses south of a famous square in New York City a room with two long windows faces the street. Before one of these windows is a jeweler's bench with its conglomerate outfit of tools, metals, enamel and blowpipe. At the other a low rocking-chair, a sewing-box, a basket filled with scraps of brilliant silks and velvets and the stuffed body of a doll. These neighborly work corners symbolize the secret of a rare achievement, that of a couple who have climbed jointly to individual careers.

The modern notion relative to husbands and wives pursuing individual fame is that they must take separate paths, at least in so far as their professional attainment is concerned. For the most part this notion is not incorrect. The path to a career is generally rugged and lonely. Not so with the Ackleys! They do everything together, and of everything they make holiday.

Floyd Ackley is widely known as an artist in hand-made jewelry. He is one of the few people in the country who makes an enviable income entirely from the practice of this craft. His work is exhibited in Boston, Chicago, New York and London. Edith Ackley, his wife, creator of doll caricatures of well-known persons, has come into fame with her delightful and lifelike marionettes which she presents at clubs, schools, house parties, and in theaters. Recently a series of performances at the Provincetown theater in New York City sold out to standing room.

The spirit of camaraderie that comes from intelligent cooperation is felt the minute one enters the large room which is the Ackleys' studio and a part of their home. The spirit is in the room itself with its easy chairs, its workshop corners, its exhibition table and wall piece of black velvet on which Mr. Ackley displays his jewelry, and at the farther end of the room, its miniature stage curtained by an Oriental rug on which Mrs. Ackley tries out her marionettes.

"We cut a hole in the hall to make the stage, and didn't tell the landlady about it until a long time afterward," Mrs. Ackley confessed with gay unrepentance.

On the day I called to see them I found Mr. Ackley, broad-shouldered, gentle, with twinkling eyes and ready laugh, skillfully pouring enamel into a design from the point of a knife. Mrs. Ackley, tall, slender, with a face serious in repose, became suddenly a creature of vivacity and whimsy as she manipulated the strings that walked her clown across the room to me—a clown so real that I had the impulse to teeter him when he dexterously perched upon my foot.

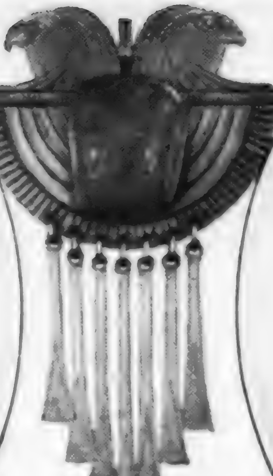
From another room of the apartment came the sound of hammering.

"It's just Telka building a book-case," Mr. Ackley answered my unspoken inquiry. Then he called for Telka to come into the studio.

This is really a story of three people rather than of two, you see. Telka, seven years old, a chubby, blond little girl with very red cheeks is, of course, the Ackleys' greatest achievement. Telka, like her parents, has busy, creative hands, and a busy, artistic imagination. She attends a private school in the city, where among many other things she is studying carpentry. Hence the book-case—if it turns out to be that.

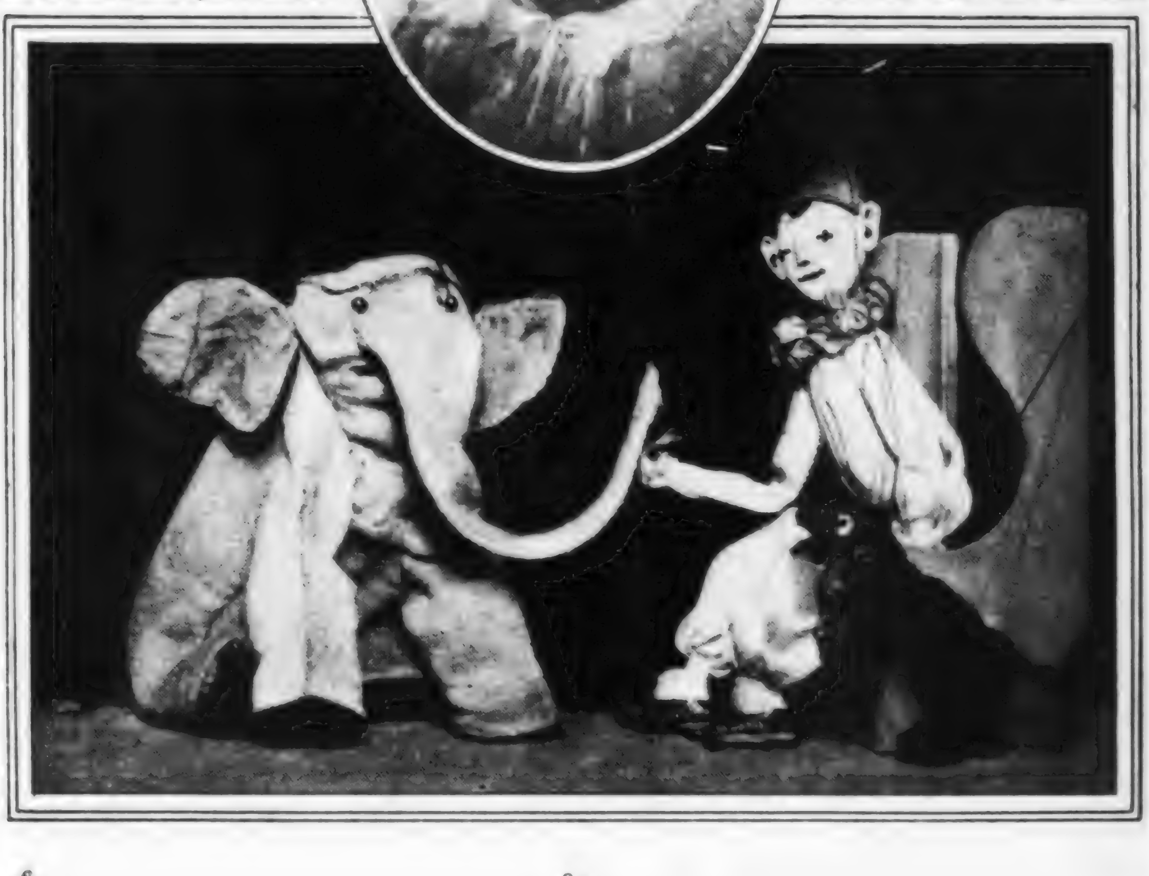
Telka is naturally familiar with tools. Much to the consternation of relatives, her mother taught her to use sharp scissors when she was two years old. Recently under her father's supervision she made herself a ring and a bracelet.

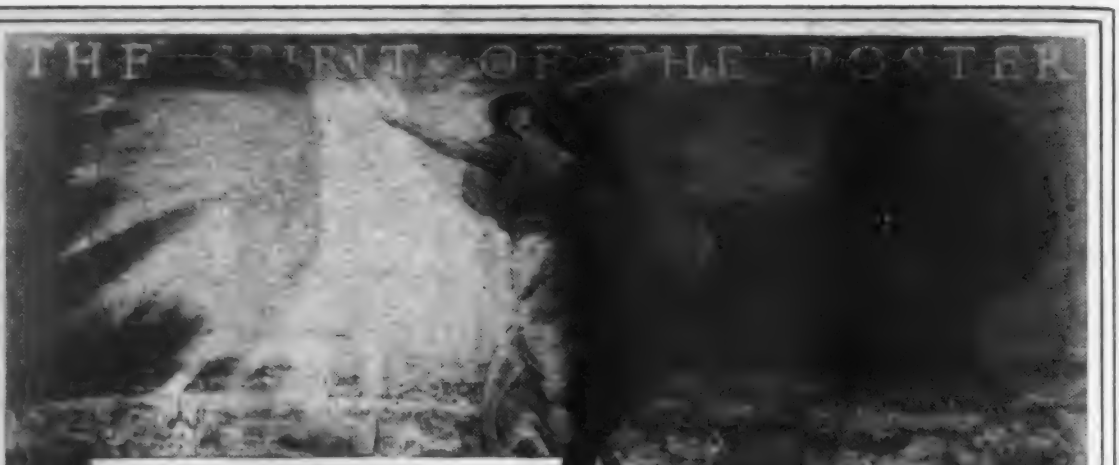
[*Continued on page 153*]

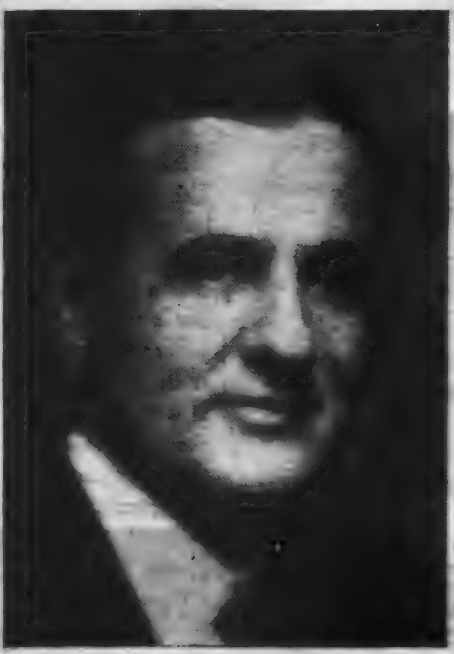


THE Ackleys met sixteen years ago at an art school where Floyd was studying interior decoration and Edith Flack was a student of portrait painting. Mr. Ackley's bent for odd and effective design found an outlet in making jewelry for friends and acquaintances whose commissions made it possible for him to marry and open a studio.

If it hadn't been for her daughter, Telka, Edith Ackley might still be making chains for her husband's jewelry. When Telka was a baby Mrs. Ackley made her a queer, original doll that was so funny every one laughed at it. She was induced to make others for a tea shop and from them developed the marionettes that are now her specialty.




THE SPIRIT OF THE POSTER



KERWIN FULTON is Chairman of the Board of the Outdoor Advertising Association of America, an organization with two thousand members which controls locations in more than fifteen thousand towns. Mr. Fulton is a native of Nova Scotia. He is now forty years old. Since he held an eight-dollar-a-week clerkship Broadway's electric signs have developed to the point where some are rented for as much as one hundred thousand dollars a year.

He Paints the Midnight Skies

Behind Broadway's blazing electric signs and a network of billboards covering a continent is Kerwin Fulton. The huge business founded by picturesque knights of the brush is full of stories typical of American enterprise

by Kenneth Wilcox Payne

IF ONE of the million daily passers-by beneath the dazzling kaleidoscope of Broadway's midnight rays should pause to analyze that world-famous spectacle he would notice that it seemed as methodically designed as the most elaborate stage setting in any of the hundred theaters that flourish underneath it.

NOT so long ago, the story goes, the producers of a motion picture placarded New York with posters reading: "The Storm Is Coming." Within a day the Weather Bureau complained that it was being deluged with 'phone calls asking how severe this big storm would be when it should come! Another poster once showed the Woolworth Building collapsing, and the number of sight-seeing visitors to the Woolworth Tower dropped so amazingly that the advertiser agreed to cover up the poster with another less suggestive of disaster.

In color, in arrangement, in their contrasting movements and in their strategic settings of jet-black sky, the monstrous scintillating jewels of the Great White Way show unmistakably the work of a single guiding hand.

And if our inquiring pedestrian should seek that guiding hand behind Broadway's $20,000,000 panorama of restless colored lights he would be led to the offices of Kerwin Fulton, on the top floor of one of Manhattan's latest skyscrapers.

There he would meet a youthful and magnetic executive of the newer school of big business—a man who, in 1926, having barely turned forty, heads a $60,000,000 business, and who, a score of years ago, was a fifteen-dollar-a-week bookkeeper in a sign painter's office.

In 1902 Kerwin Fulton, then seventeen years of age, left his father's home in Nova Scotia to seek his fortune in New York. For a day or two he tramped Manhattan's sidewalks, job hunting, with one eye speculatively considering the ugly street signs of the period and with the other eye scanning the want ads of the newspapers. He had only the diminishing remains of an eight-dollar capital in his pockets. But at the end of his second week young Kerwin Fulton had eight dollars more in his pocket—his first pay as clerk in a printing office. Three years later, having meanwhile changed jobs twice and learned bookkeeping at night school, young Kerwin Fultot found himself assistann manager of the Van Beuren and New York Billposting Company, with his feet firmly on the ladder that was to lead him eventually to great financial success.

In those early years of the twentieth century, when Kerwin Fulton was getting his start, a revolution was already under way in outdoor advertising—a revolution that has raised the once-despised sign and poster business from garish chaos to a rôle of dignity and artistic merit.

Kerwin Fulton, having been one of the most influential leaders in this outdoor advertising revolution, is naturally full of interesting anecdotes about the early "nomadic" stage of this colorful industry.

"Prior to 1900," he explains, "outdoor advertising, as it is conducted now, was unknown in America. Every city and town, of course, was accustomed to the sight of tattered circus posters on its walls and fences, and to gaudy painted advertisements on the sides of barns and business blocks. But the sign business was seasonal and haphazard, and was never employed in orderly national advertising campaigns. Indeed, sign painting and bill posting had grown up in a most sporadic way.

"They say it all started some fifty-six years ago, when a dignified, white-bearded old gentleman and a lanky youth with flourishing sideburns—the two forming the queerly-assorted firm of Bradbury and Houghtaling—set sail down the Mississippi River from St. Paul on a flatboat.

"Their cargo consisted of paint, brushes, ladders, and a big idea. All the way down the river, on houses, barns, wharves and fences—everywhere they could lay a brush—Bradbury and Houghtaling painted the mystic legend, '*St. Jacob's Oil.*' It is chronicled that they daubed the whole Mississippi Valley—for the benefit of steamboat passengers—with the information that St. Jacob's oil would cure any ailment from corns, colic, chilblain, catarrh, cancer or consumption to toothache, typhoid, tetanus, tumors and St. Vitus dance. In their lazy hours on the flatboat, Bradbury and Houghtaling apparently boned-up on the medical dictionary in order to discover new diseases for St. Jacob's oil to cure."

Thus it is that Bradbury and Houghtaling are generally regarded as having been America's pioneers in national landscape advertising with paint. Rapidly their big idea spread across the country, while they themselves, in succeeding years, splashed the terrestrial scene far and wide with the names of "Hood's Sarsaparilla," of the "Official Five Cent Cigar," and of "Bull Durham." Meanwhile other barn wall artists sprang up by the legion, until sheds and fences and blank walls from coast to coast blazed forth in the war-paint of indiscriminate publicity seekers. Bradbury died in 1878, but his partner carried their lurid labor on undaunted, and became known as "Old Hote"—father of the great American outdoor sport of sign painting on a continental scale.

In the Old Days of Bill Sticking

UNREGULATED bill sticking grew, too, side by side with the painted signs, and persons of æsthetic sensibility began to protest violently against the use of the United States as a gigantic easel for Lydia Pinkham and the advertisers of liver pills. Rough billboards marred the residential sections of every town; quack remedies flaunted their claims from every barn along the railroad; the owner of every fence had repeatedly to rip off the tattered posters that had grown upon it overnight, obscuring his warning, "Post No Bills."

Then came the automobile, and good roads. As motor travel increased and as nondescript advertising signs thickened along the highways, Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Landscapes sprang up; state legislation against the billboards was demanded and occasionally enacted. And still the unregulated billboards spread.

"But as early as 1900," says Kerwin Fulton, "a trade association had been formed among the outdoor advertisers, with the result that the unregulated era of sign painting and bill posting to which 'Old Hote' and his picturesque partner gave early impetus on that historic Mississippi flatboat trip is surrendering under our eyes to a more restrained era. Recently a clean-up campaign in Pennsylvania removed more than 20,000 signs from the highways and the same thing is being done in countless spots of scenic beauty in other states.

"Perhaps you have noticed that the old sign, 'Post No Bills,' is less common on the fences than it once was. It isn't needed so much as it used to be, for the 'sniper'—as the paster-up of unauthorized handbills is called—has been replaced by organized forces of progress in outdoor advertising. You must have noticed, too, that the quack nostrum ads grow fewer and farther apart, and that most of the present day billboards advertise nationally accredited products, and reflect higher ideals of poster art. And perhaps you have noticed also that the poster panels in cities and towns are being converted into substantial, standardized structures, neatly painted, edged with uniform white frames and green molding, flanked with latticework, and often placed in attractively landscaped settings of shrubbery and lawn. As a matter of fact, approximately 2,000 members of outdoor advertising firms controlling nearly 400,000 panels in more than 15,000 towns have recently committed themselves to a five-year clean-up program."

All this program of responsibility and progress in outdoor advertising is actually being worked out this year because a man who is already one of America's younger captains of industry accidentally fell into a bookkeeper's job two decades ago under the famous Barney Link. Behind Kerwin Fulton loom the shadows of two of the most picturesque characters of the adolescent years of American advertising—two men who first helped largely to cover our country with the unsightly structures of the irresponsible billboard era, but who dreamed of finer things to come, when advertising with artistic posters and scintillating electrical displays would replace the crudities of earlier years.

One of those men was Barney Link and the other was O. J. Gude, father of the Great White Way. The former's name lives in the Barney Link Fellowship, at the University of Wisconsin, which has been established with the idea of subjecting advertising methods to constructive scientific analysis. And the work of the other man—O. J. Gude—lives in the 25,000,000-candlepower aurora that flares up nightly over Broadway.

"Times have changed," says Mr. Fulton, "since the days when Twenty-third Street was the heart of Manhattan's theater district—when Broadway was known as 'the Line' instead of the Gay White Way, and when O. J. Gude's famous old pickle sign flaunted over Madison Square its promise of the lights to come.

"Now, twenty blocks north of Madison Square, Broadway blazes at night with the greatest concentration of artificial light in the world.

"There are at least a thousand major electric signs in the theater district alone, but just twenty-one of these signs—the so-called 'spectaculars'—dominate all the rest with their enormous animated figures and dazzling colored lamps."

One of the typical "spectaculars"—with its team of running Eskimos and its flashing whip and brilliant aurora borealis required 19,000 electric bulbs, twenty-one miles of intricate wiring, and twenty-nine automatic "flashers" or revolving drums that did the sort of work which the mechanician on the old pickle sign had to do by hand.

Costing approximately $35,000 to construct—exclusive of the frame-work—consuming 200 kilowatts of current per hour, a sign of this kind may bring a rental of nearly $100,000 a year. Its advertising message, written in letters fifty feet high, erected on 10,000 square feet of steel scaffolding, is visible every twenty-four hours to more people in the street below than make up the entire population of Boston.

Did you start
this FIRE?

Study the birds
this spring!
Audubon Society

Since the days of Liberty Loan Campaigns the outdoor poster has been used with increasing frequency for promoting movements of general public interest. The principles of poster art have been studied and applied with less emphasis on the sensational and more on pictorial beauty.

"Statistics indicate that every month these dizzily flashing sky-signs are observed by hundreds of thousands of transients from 1,600 towns in every state of the Union, and from 200 cities in fifty foreign countries," Mr. Fulton says. "The fame of the Broadway spectacle has spread to the far corners of the globe. The late King of Siam was so envious of it that he ordered through us an electric sign of a great golden eagle with flapping wings to be installed upon his palace in Bangkok. This so impressed his subjects that just before his death he ordered a second electric sign, of a steam-spouting locomotive with revolving wheels.

"Of course on our own continent every American city has its brilliant displays of flashing electric signs. Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, San Francisco, and, notably, Atlantic City approach closest to the gorgeousness of Broadway.

"Still, the Broadway aurora remains unique in the world, not only in size, splendor and complexity, but also in the science to which the spectacle has been reduced. Artists have plotted the midnight heavens of Times Square, and so painted them in pictures of fire that each of the great spectaculars will stand out strongly, rather than merge into the meaningless jumble that might easily develop but for careful planning."

Unused leases costing thousands a year are held on many a Broadway roof to prevent the erection there of a sign that might conflict with existing signs. Street patrols mingle each night with the theater crowds, constantly scanning the big signs to see that no single unit flickers out; for the advertiser is guaranteed that his sign, flashing on automatically at sunset, will not fail for a moment until an hour after midnight. If it should accidentally go out for a time the advertiser is entitled to a rebate that may amount to hundreds of dollars. In a spring sleet storm, or even a summer storm, when single icy drops hit the blazing-hot nitrogen lamps hundreds of dollars' worth of bulbs may explode in a few moments. Then there is a scurrying of electricians up to the control shack on the roof, where amid a clattering jumble of switches and revolving drums, great stocks of spare lamps are stored. Out on to the perilous storm-swept scaffolding, two hundred feet above the streets, clamber the votaries of the midnight rays. In a short time the shattered lamps are replaced, and the fiery altar to the great god Publicity is flaring up anew.

Mr. Fulton explains that the expense for a huge sign's upkeep alone, reaching in some cases $50,000 a year, makes Broadway, with its million pedestrians daily almost the only spot in the world where the greatest of the spectaculars can be profitably operated. On some of the older buildings the roof rental for a sign that consumes enough current to light every home in a city of 10,000 population is greater than the rental paid by tenants of all the floors beneath! Broadway's twenty-one spectaculars alone constitute nearly two acres of brilliant colored light.

It is Kerwin Fulton now, who—as successor in the business built by Link and Gude—leases space on the midnight sky of Broadway for advertisers to paint in a million vari-colored lights.

Guerrilla Warfare Among the Billboard Men

AS A boy Kerwin Fulton had played on the shores of the Bay of Fundy with his fourteen brothers and sisters, descendants of Judge James Fulton, who came to America from Ireland in 1760. An outdoor life of hunting, swimming and riding in the rugged climate of Nova Scotia endowed him with a constitution of iron that was to serve him well in later years. From his early days in New York when he worked all day as a clerk and studied bookkeeping until late every night, up to the present time when his magnetic energy still amazes his associates, Kerwin Fulton has profited by the invaluable asset of radiant good health.

His second job in New York was as a bookkeeper in a small factory, which brought him ten dollars a week but still opened up no promising channel for his ambition. One day he again consulted the want ad columns of a newspaper as he paced the sidewalk of Fourth Avenue. And he discovered that as he read he was standing right at the door of the Van Beuren Company, which advertised its anxiety to pay a promising young bookkeeper as much as fifteen dollars a week. Young Fulton decided to apply for this position, for he already had perceived the possibilities of the outdoor advertising field. Two years after he landed the job the Van Beuren Company was merged with others to form the Van Beuren and New York Billposting Company, and thus Kerwin Fulton came under the influence of Barney Link, then the dominating power in the new company, and in the whole billboard world.

"Back in the days of the Civil War," says Kerwin Fulton, "Barney Link was a farmer's boy in Wisconsin. He ran away from home as soon as he was old enough, and took to the high seas aboard an ancient three-master in the coastwise trade out of New York. Soon he decided that the sea offered too much of hardship and too little of financial progress. At the age of twenty-two the lure of Barnum & Bailey's golden caravans won him away from a roving life at sea to a roving life ashore. He started as a humble paste man in Barnum's bucket and brush brigade, traveling a week ahead of the big tops and plastering each town with the alliterative superlatives that the muse of Barnum conceived.

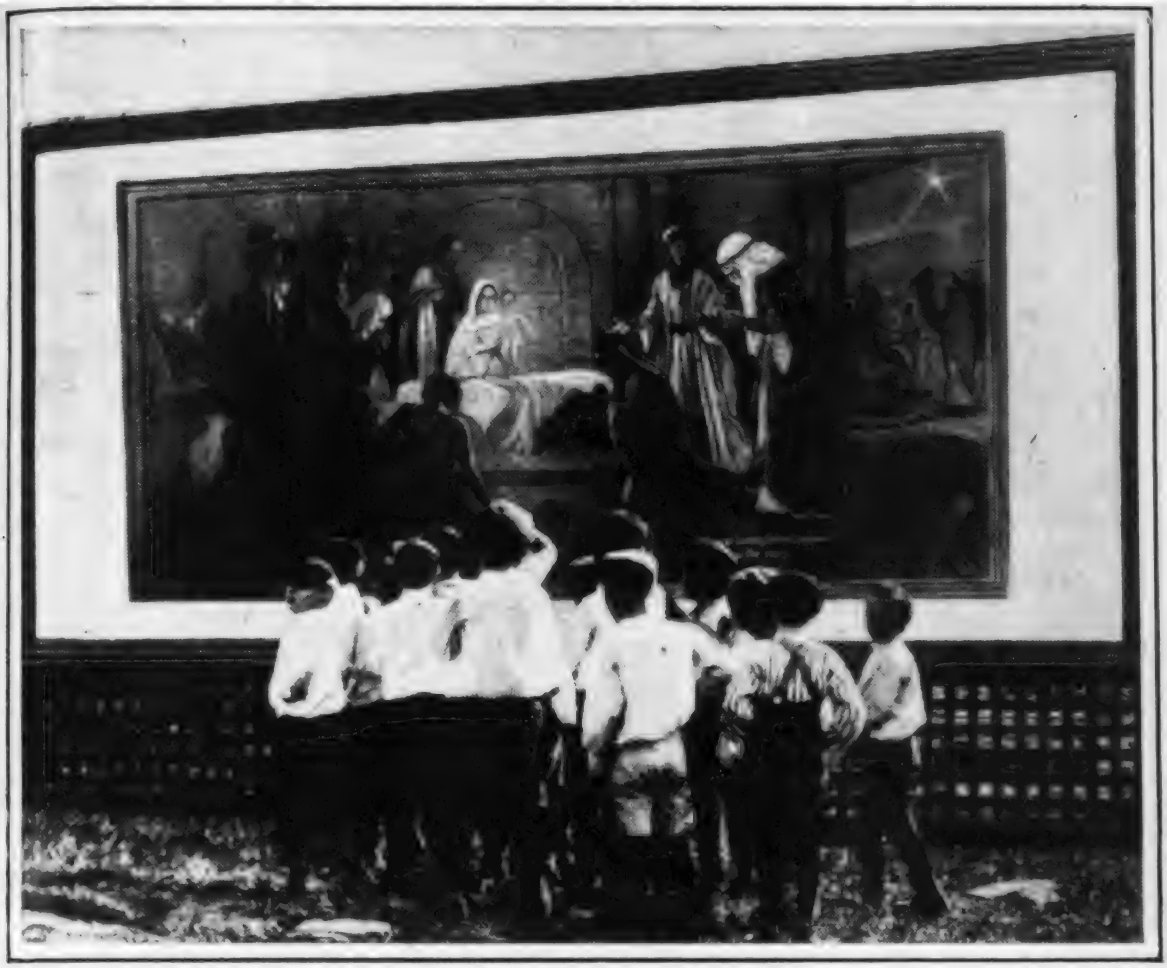
"Those were the free-and-easy days when enterprising advance men like Barney Link often used to 'jump their locations', which meant that they posted their paper on any strategic fence or building, without consulting the owner, and if the latter protested, they 'squared him' afterward with a handful of passes to the circus. Later Barney Link went abroad with Buffalo Bill and introduced the early school of American circus poster art to the amazed capitals of Europe. In 1893 Barney Link set up in the bill posting business for himself, in Brooklyn, and within a few years he and his partner, William Fay, had secured practical control of the Brooklyn territory."

Those were the hectic days, before Kerwin Fulton's time, when guerrilla warfare was waged among the billboard men. Rival gangs of bill stickers fought each other bloodily over good locations, wielding long paste brushes until the police interfered. One concern would put up a billboard one day, and would find a rival's billboard built in front of it next morning. Sometimes as many as half a dozen billboards would be built on successive nights, one directly in front of the other. Sentinels had to be posted at night to guard the best locations. Sometimes a rival concern would kidnap the sentinels, rip down their sign and pile its wreckage in front of the office of the company that had erected it. This was a delicate hint that a competitor's billboard would be found on the spot next morning.

Thus, the billboard industry was torn by civil war within and was likewise subjected to fiery vituperation from without. The public clamored against its uglier phases. But Barney Link went right ahead, all the time dreaming his dream of a saner day, meanwhile consolidating his allied forces and expanding his business afar from New York. Finally came the financial coup by which he and his associates secured control of their worst rival, the Van Beuren Company, and organized the Van Beuren and New York Billposting Company.

That was in 1904—the eventful year in which there were thrown together Barney Link, then so-called Czar of the billboard world, and Kerwin Fulton, this bookkeeper of the Van Beuren plant, who had drawn up all the financial statements at the time of the merger.

Barney Link was quick to detect in the handsome young bookkeeper an amazing command of finance and a thorough knowledge of the business. Within a year Link had raised



A new variety of outdoor art gallery is the outgrowth of the old-fashioned unsightly billboard. The irresponsible "sniper" is no longer permitted to stick up his tattered paper or paint his gaudy designs on the most convenient wall or fence. Bill posting and sign painting are vigilantly regulated by progressive leadership within an industry that has risen above the crude taste and cut-throat business methods of its founders. It has survived violent internal dissensions among powerful competitive interests and adverse criticism on the part of the public.

Kerwin Fulton to the position of assistant manager in charge of sales and operating. And there Kerwin Fulton's glowing personality had a chance to exert its commanding powers.

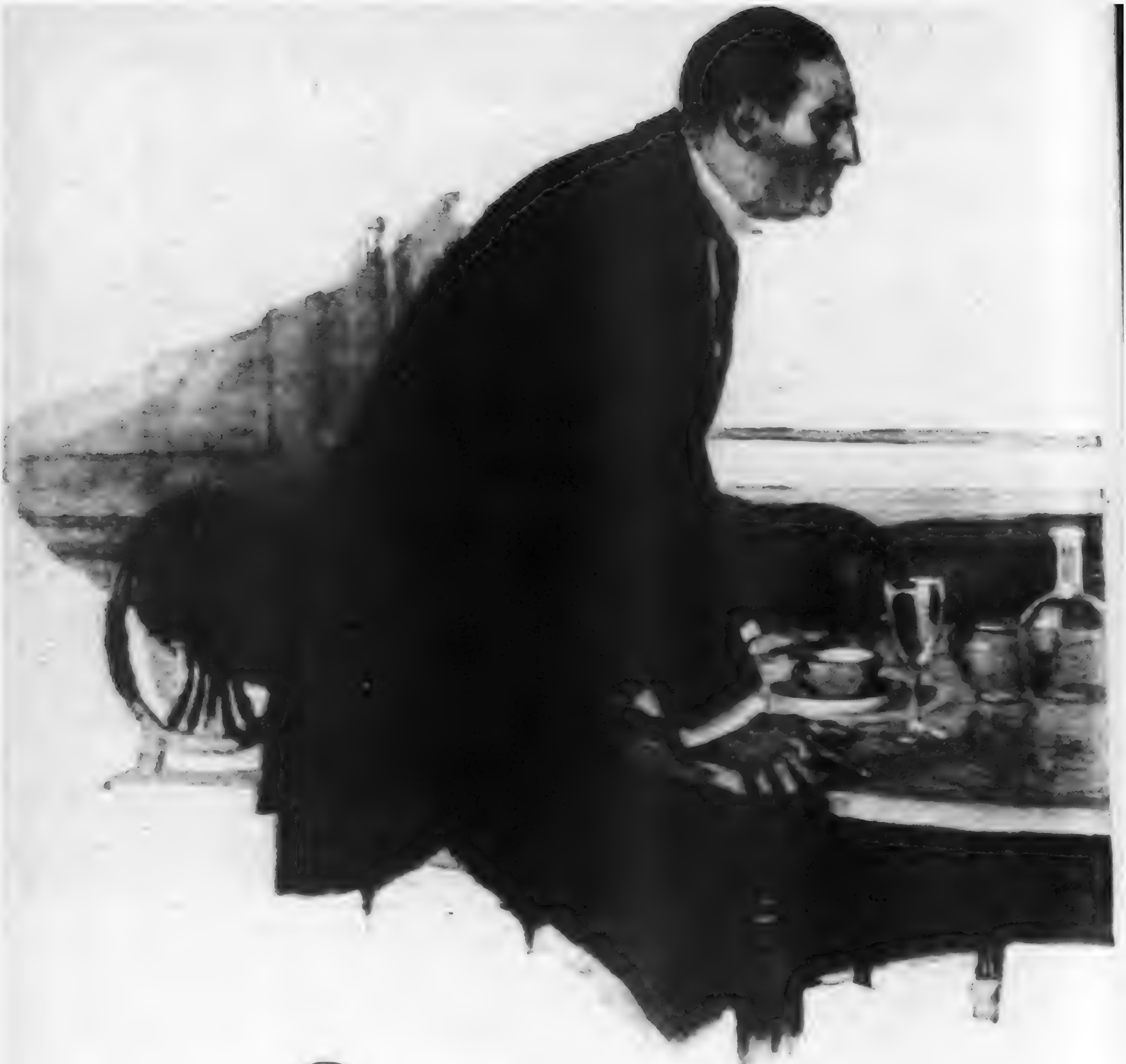
In 1913, eleven years after his arrival in New York, Kerwin Fulton was made vice-president and general manager of the company. Before Barney Link's death, in 1917, Mr. Fulton had become his close personal adviser, and had absorbed the Barney Link vision of a unified national system of outdoor publicity.

"Link had been largely instrumental in modernizing the poster business, although dozens of others had played important parts in the enterprise," says Mr. Fulton. "Meanwhile, O. J. Gude had been building up the painted sign business. Years ago, young Oscar Gude, itinerant devotee of the pioneer art of Bradbury & Houghtaling, used to drive a wagon about the rural routes, painting rocks and fences with advertisements of washing powder and bluing. The story runs that in the villages, from the tail of his wagon, he would deliver ballyhoo talks and distribute free samples.

"He blazoned the sign 'Pearline' all the way from coast to coast. Later he had a crew of painters working for him, painting 'buckeyes.' A buckeye was a vast landscape, sprawling all over the side of a three-story building. Gude had an imaginative old Italian artist who would start at the top of the wall and work downward, creating as he went along mountains and forests and splashing blue waterfalls and flower-spotted meadows. Down in the foreground of this gigantic mural he would sketch a jutting rock on which Gude or one of his assistants would carefully portray in perfect detail the advertised package.

"It wasn't pretty and it wasn't art, but Gude discovered that it was such effective advertising that he finally decided to say farewell to his employers and to go into the sign painting business for himself, just as Barney Link was soon to set up in the poster business. Gude's first studio was a cellar in lower New York, and his

[*Continued on page 156*]



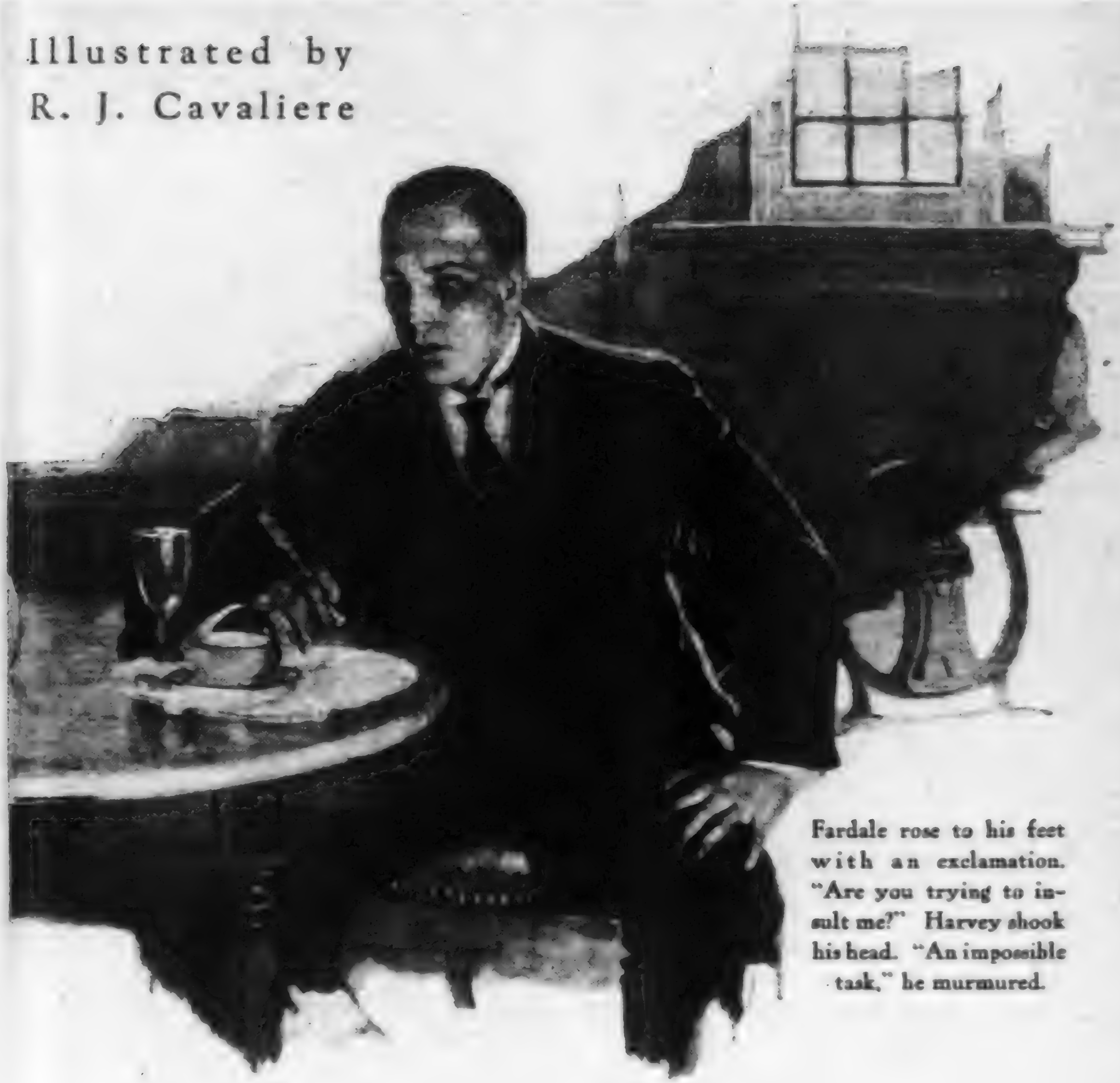
By
E. Phillips Oppenheim

Harvey

A romance of London and the Riviera in which

HARVEY GARRARD, a favorite of the Riviera, is summoned to London following the death of Mr. Armitage, senior partner in the firm of Garrard & Garrard, leather manufacturers, to find that unless obligations amounting to one hundred thousand pounds are met within forty-eight hours, the firm faces bankruptcy. He appeals for aid to his wife Mildred, but she refuses to raise money on either the house or her jewels. That night Harvey discovers in the warehouse waiting-room the body of old Ebenezer B. Swayle, a wealthy American dealer in hides. In searching his brief-case Harvey comes upon United States securities amounting to one million dollars. These he deposits in his own private safe. Realizing that the securities would tide him through his financial crisis, he decides to appropriate them, vowing to restore them to the rightful heirs later on. Almost immediately, following the firm's financial readjustment, a wave of prosperity sweeps over the organization and Harvey begins to create a stir in the business world. In the meanwhile, Mildred, a beautiful, selfish woman, is accepting the attentions of Herbert Fardale, a wealthy banker whom Harvey has already ordered from his house. Garrard's problems are further

Illustrated by
R. J. Cavaliere



Fardale rose to his feet with an exclamation. "Are you trying to insult me?" Harvey shook his head. "An impossible task," he murmured.

Garrard's Crime

a sportsman gambles for love and recognition

augmented by the arrival of Grace Swayle, the only heir of the dead man, who has come to join her grandfather in London. Believing him to be wealthy, she is amazed to learn that he left barely enough to defray funeral expenses. Confused and embarrassed, Harvey decides that he must offer her temporary aid and promises her employment as his secretary. Grace accepts the offer eagerly and agrees to undertake her new duties as soon as she returns from a short business visit to the United States. Shortly afterward, Harvey finds it imperative to go to the States. His wife Mildred, learning of his plans, misinterprets them and accuses him of absconding. Without attempting a reconciliation with her, he leaves and finds that Grace Swayle has secured passage on the same ship. During the voyage a bond of friendship springs up between them that promises to lead to further entanglements and Harvey finds himself tortured by the knowledge that he should avoid her and a desire to be with her constantly. Having arrived in New York, he closes an important business deal and returns to the ship to find a reporter there questioning Grace concerning the death of her grandfather and the subsequent disappearance of the million dollar bonds. Realizing that the reporter is leading her onto dangerous ground Harvey interrupts tersely with: "Miss Swayle has nothing more to say."

This month's instalment.

THE journalist hesitated for a brief moment. "Sure," he murmured. "That's all right. I'd like to know, though, are you, Mr. Garrard, Miss Swayle's guardian?"

"Certainly not," Harvey replied. "Mr. Swayle died in my warehouse on a business visit to my firm. His transactions with us, lasting through many years, have led to an honorable, if commercial friendship. Miss Swayle has consulted me as to the temporary loss of her fortune and her own future, and she is acting for a time as my private secretary."

There was a ghost of a smile upon the journalist's face as he put away his note-book.

"By the by," Harvey inquired, "how on earth do you get back to New York?"

"I have a launch waiting out with the pilot's boat," was the matter-of-fact explanation. "We heard you were going to be late so we engaged it at the last moment."

"I congratulate you upon your enterprise," Harvey remarked. "I should scarcely have thought the result worth it."

The journalist buttoned up his note-book in his pocket, as he made his adieux.

"I shall venture to disagree with you, Mr. Garrard," he said.

"OF COURSE you were quite right," Grace admitted, as the door closed behind their interviewer, "but why did you not wish me to tell him what I had discovered?"

"Because if your property really was stolen," Harvey explained, "it would only put the thieves on their guard if you advertise the fact that you know of its existence."

"It was very stupid of me not to have thought of that," she acknowledged. "That reminds me, I have not yet told you my news. I saw Mr. Brandon, who was grandfather's lawyer. He told me that my grandfather had saved money all his life and had made a great deal in real estate, but he had the shock of his life when, two years ago, the local bank failed three days after he had drawn out a large sum of money to complete some purchases. Grandfather's partner was nearly ruined, and since then, Mr. Brandon told me, grandfather used to carry about nearly all his money in government bonds and stock. There were a few which he could trace, and of these I have a list, with the numbers."

Harvey was silent for a moment. It seemed to him that he could see those numbers in the left-hand corner of the sheaves of bonds. He could see them on a Scotland Yard placard, in the agony column of the *Times*, could hear the surprised exclamation of the cashier at the Southern Bank glancing from list to list. He shivered a little and poured himself out another cocktail.

"Was your lawyer able to get hold of anything for you at all?" he asked. "It doesn't seem possible for your grandfather to have taken everything he possessed in the world away with him."

She laughed happily.

"Of course he couldn't. There was quite a nice balance in the bank, some more money due from the business and a house and furniture which Mr. Brandon is going to sell for me. He has given me a thousand dollars, and I can have some more when I want it. Can't you see," she added, raising her arms and slowly pivoting, "how expensive I am? These clothes came from the best place in New York. And my hat—well, look at it!"

"Ravishing!"

"I have two evening frocks," she continued, "and many other things. I had a lovely day's shopping in New York. I thought you would have made remarks long ago. Tell me, do I not please you?"

"You wear your clothes always like a Frenchwoman," he sighed, "but you were sufficiently attractive before. I suppose in view of this change in your fortunes I shall lose my secretary."

She leaned over and kissed him lightly on the cheek.

"You are a very foolish man," she scoffed. "The bugle has sounded. Shall we go in to lunch?"

THAT six days' voyage to Southampton brought something entirely new in Harvey Garrard's life, something the sweetness and wonder of which he realized day by day, but the fundamental meaning of which he studiously ignored. Grace was not only a delightful and sympathetic companion, but she had the Frenchwoman's instinct of sex-assertion, all of the time surrounding with a little esthetic mystery the commonplaceisms of every-day intercourse. Those few thrilling moments of the voyage out had never been repeated—seemed, indeed, to call for no repetition. They never missed their evening promenade and she would give him her lips when they bade one another farewell, with the affectionate warmth of an understanding and admiring friend. She lavished upon him signs and tokens of affection to which he had never been accustomed and which all the time he found more enchanting. That they lived in danger, he sometimes, though she apparently never, realized. Even their last night, when they steamed up the Channel, brought with it none of the perilous sadness of parting, for she had insisted upon it that on the next day but one her desk and typewriter should be established in his office.

"You don't really need to work," he reminded her. "Why don't you take a holiday for a time?"

She made a little grimace.

"You are not polite," she complained. "You wish to get rid of me."

"I most certainly do not," he assured her earnestly. "I am speaking only for your own sake. Bermondsey is such a dreary spot for you to come to every day."

"You foolish person!" she laughed. "You will be there, will you not? Very well, I shall be content. I shall take down your letters and keep everything about your correspondence very neat and tidy, and some day when you are not too busy you will perhaps take me out. We shall dance together sometimes?"

"If you wish," he promised.

"Of course I wish. And please look more happy about it," she begged. "At times when we talk about the future you look at me so strangely. No one would imagine you were glad to think that you had a new little friend who is very fond of you."

"I have anxieties," he told her, "which I can not share with any one. Very soon I hope that I may get rid of them. Then you will see how much more cheerful I can be."

"I hope that it will be soon," she declared. "Not that I mind your having moods, but I like to see you always happy. Now, if you will promise not to be angry, Harvey, I am going to ask you something."

"I don't think that you could easily make me angry."

"It was the lawyer who put it into my head. He told me that my grandfather had become very queer during the last twelve months. He was not only afraid of banks, but he was afraid of safes. He used, Mr. Brandon told me, often to carry practically everything he possessed on earth in his despatch box—like the one that was found empty in your waiting-room. He suggested—Mr. Brandon suggested—that the bonds might have been stolen that night, perhaps by the person who found him. Do you believe, dear friend, that there is any one in your place who could possibly have taken them?"

"I can think of no one," he replied, without a tremor in his voice, "but then you must remember that, excepting for Mr. Greatorex, they were all strangers to me. When we get back, if you like, I will have inquiries made about them."

"It is not necessary," she assured him. "The police will do all that."

"When shall you go to Scotland Yard?"

"I thought tomorrow. I have a letter to the Chief Commissioner from Mr. Brandon explaining everything."

He was watching the flash from a distant lighthouse. He was calm enough, but he sought in vain for courage to make the inevitable request.

"Tell me," she asked, looking at him a little anxiously, "you have had no more messages this evening?"

"None," he assured her.

"Everything is still up, up, up?"

"Mounting to the skies. There hasn't been a sign of a break. Why do you ask?"

"I thought that you looked worried," she confided. "You haven't a headache or anything, have you?"

"Nothing of the sort."

They were seated side by side on steamer chairs. She thrust her arm gently through his.

"Then I think it must be that you are sorry our voyage is over," she said. "Tell me that you are, please. I have loved it so much."

HE THOUGHT of that terrible Nemesis which even now might be awaiting him and shivered a little. Hour after hour during the last week he had devoted himself to studying the bank figures. There were great gaps, however, which it had been impossible for him to fill up. That he would be able to withdraw the whole of the securities at a moment's notice was, to say the least of it, unlikely.

"I think that I am developing a temperament," he confessed. "Certainly I am sorry that our voyage is over. I do not need to tell you that, dear. I have found it wonderful."

"Do you think that your wife will be very pleased to see you?" she asked wistfully.

At least here he could be honest, and, as he knew, consoling.

"She will be perfectly indifferent about the matter," he answered. "She will greet me as though I had departed for the city in the morning, and had just returned. So long as I keep her supplied with everything else she desires in life I honestly believe that she is more content when I am away."

Grace gave a sigh of relief.

"I shall really be able to see you sometimes in London then?"

"Probably as much as you want to," he assured her.

He thought a little drearily of what London had meant to him in the past—an hour or so's polo at Ranelagh or Hurlingham, a game of golf at Sunningdale or Woking, a great many dull and wearisome parties given by people in whom he could find no interest. Mildred, although her social position was too secure for such scrupulousness to be necessary, made a point of accepting with meticulous care every invitation which came from the right people. She liked to be seen everywhere, to read of her dresses in the papers, to be photographed as often as possible, and the idea of a party to which she had not been invited was always an irritation to her. He reflected with a certain amount of satisfaction, however, that his increasing business responsibilities would afford him a good excuse for a gradual withdrawal from the majority of these functions. The idea of them had suddenly become more distasteful than ever. Besides, what right had he to show himself anywhere when any day might see him in the felon's dock? Sometimes—that night was one of the occasions—the temptation to tell Grace everything became almost irresistible. Then he pictured to himself the horror in her eyes, the slow shrinking away from him, the unmistakable contempt with which she might show some grudging consideration, if indeed she showed any at all. The horrors of confession were almost as great as those of discovery. He summoned up his courage and took the one step further into the morass which he had dreaded.

"I should like, if I may, to ask you a favor," he said.

"A favor from me to you?" she laughed. "It is granted, my king."

"Don't be too sure," he rejoined gravely. "It is quite a serious matter. You spoke just now of your lawyer's suspicion that some one in my employ might have stolen your grandfather's bonds. I have an idea about that. It does not amount to a suspicion—just an idea. I wonder whether you would, when we reach England, refrain for twenty-four hours from taking that list of securities to Scotland Yard?"

"Why of course," she answered without hesitation. "If you like I will not go until you tell me."

"That is very kind of you," he acknowledged.

"It is not kind at all. It is just natural. And in return you must promise me something. Promise me that even if you give up this new interest of yours in business, if you go back to your old manner of life, that you will not send me away altogether. You will let me be where I can see you sometimes."

"I shall never go back to the old life, and I promise willingly that I will never lose sight of you. All the same I hope I may be able to do something better for you than keeping you always by my side."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that I must try to find you young people—friends of your own age."

She shook her head.

"You need find me nobody but yourself," she told him, laying her hand upon his. "Just yourself, please. I am young, I know, but I have never cared much for other young people. You could give me everything that I want in life. Some day I hope that you will, when you understand me a little better, and—don't laugh at me, please, for in some ways you are still very—is that not the word?—ingenuous—when you understand life better."

"What do you mean?" he demanded uneasily.

She rose to her feet.

"You have such a stupid conscience," she whispered, "but I love you for it."

She left him before he could attempt to reason with her, drawing her fingers caressingly across his cheek, but seeking no other embrace or farewell. A half-hour later they were taking the pilot on board. The end of the journey had arrived.

HARVEY, on his arrival at Waterloo the following morning, was strongly tempted to drive direct to Bermondsey and postpone his home-going until the evening. A sense of duty prevailed, however, and he directed his taxicab driver to Curzon Street. He was conscious of a curious feeling, as he was driven through the familiar streets, that he had been away much longer than the twenty days which his trip had taken him, that he had come back to a life radically different to the one which he had left so short a time before. The impression grew stronger all the time, and was increased with some reason when his taxi came to a standstill before his house in Curzon Street. He looked at the front in amazement. It was almost hidden in a perfect maze of scaffolding poles; the window-boxes were gone, the windows curtainless. He let himself in quickly with his latchkey and stared about him in astonishment. Not only were the painters and decorators there in force but the hall was bare of furniture. He opened the door of the dining-room only to find it absolutely empty. The men at work—there seemed to be a small army of them—stared at him as at an intruder. He pressed the bell and kept his finger upon the knob until Andrews, his own servant, came hurrying up.

"What the devil is the meaning of all this, Andrews?" Harvey demanded. "I have given no orders for redecorating. The house doesn't need it. Where is your mistress?"

Andrews was obviously exceedingly ill at ease. His thin face was furrowed and lined with anxiety. He drew a letter with great care from his pocket and handed it to his master.

"I was entrusted with this by Mrs. Garrard, sir," he announced. "She desired me to see that you had it immediately on your arrival."

Harvey tore open the envelope and moved back as he read the message.

DEAR HARVEY:

I learned today what I suspected from the first; that your visit to the States on the pretext of business is simply a blind to deceive your creditors and that you are by now probably on your way to South America.

Your treatment of me is disgraceful. The little I can do to protect myself I am doing. I have sold the house and all the furniture to Lord Cranley. He will be moving in almost immediately—perhaps before you are home. I was obliged to sell, I am afraid, at a considerable sacrifice, but I do not suppose that you have taken any steps to protect me, and I have been advised that under certain contingencies your creditors might claim the house. I am therefore leaving at once for abroad, although how I am to live anywhere in comfort on the miserable income I now possess, I can not tell. I have left this letter for you in case you return, with instructions to Andrews to find out your address and forward it if the worst comes to the worst. I hope you will remember my unhappy plight if you have had the sense to get hold of any money. I shall be at the Negresco Hotel at Nice for a week or two. Afterward I shall have to try to find some very inexpensive apartments. How I hate the idea. MILDRED.

Harvey read his wife's amazing letter over three times. Then he thrust it into his pocket with a queer little smile.

"Where are my clothes, Andrews?" he enquired.

"All packed and ready, sir," the man replied. "There are seven trunks altogether. Lady Cranley allowed me one of the rooms to store them in. The polo kit, gun cases and golf clubs are all together, too."

Harvey reflected for a moment.

"Seven trunks?" he murmured.

"I can pack all that you need for a fortnight or so in town," Andrews proposed, "in two trunks and a dressing case."

"That's what you'd better do, then," Harvey acquiesced. "Store all the other things anywhere you can think of, and bring me sufficient clothes to get on with round to the Club later in the day. I shall stay there until I can find a flat. Did your mistress mention to you this absurd rumor that I was not coming back?"

"She suggested, sir, that it was possible," the man acknowledged.

"Your mistress has been totally misinformed," Harvey declared. "I have not the slightest intention of leaving the country, nor is there any necessity for me to do so. I shall call at the Club now and take a room for tonight. You can be there and put my things out, and I will give you further orders."

The man's look of relief was unmistakable.

"You'll forgive my mentioning it, sir—you won't be wishing to get rid of me for the moment, then?"

"Certainly not," was the emphatic reply. "I am perfectly satisfied with you, Andrews."

"I am exceedingly glad to hear it, sir. I will arrange for the storage of the heavy baggage during the afternoon, and I will have your clothes ready to change about half-past seven."

Harvey nodded and took his leave, drove to his club, engaged a room, and telephoned to the city. He asked for Greatorex, who was at the 'phone almost at once.

"Well, Greatorex, I am back safely. Everything all right?"

"Everything is more than all right, sir," was the cheerful response. "Our staff are working now in two shifts—till ten o'clock at night, and we have had to make special arrangements with the railway companies."

"And the foreign reports?"

"Perfectly satisfactory, sir. Stocks were smaller than ever yesterday. People who have been holding off buying are all rushing at it now."

"No message from the bank?"

"Nothing special, sir. Mr. Poulton said he would like to see you as soon as you got back."

"How do the figures stand?"

"I am sorry, sir, but I couldn't undertake to say exactly," Greatorex regretted. "I will go into it by this afternoon."

"The McDermott deal has pleased all our people, I hope?"

"I should say so, sir, indeed. All Bermondsey's talking about that."

"Good! I'll be down at three o'clock, Greatorex."

"We'll all be glad to see you, sir."

HARVEY rang off and made his way into the smoking-room. There were one or two of his old cronies about, who welcomed him with the usual British indifference.

"Turned a man of affairs, I hear, Harvey?" one remarked. "I hope it isn't going to interfere with your polo."

"Thought you were in the States?" another yawned. "Have a cocktail."

Harvey accepted and lit a cigaret. A third acquaintance—Philip Bartlett—joined the little group.

"Where's Mildred?" the latter asked. "Is it true you've sold your house, Harvey?"

Harvey nodded.

"Mildred always found it too small," he explained. "She's gone down South to finish her season. I had to bring her home a couple of months earlier than usual."

"Where are you going to hang out, then?" Bartlett enquired.

"Take a flat somewhere for a month or two. I shall have to stick it out down in the city for some time yet."

"Going to lunch here?"

"I'm not quite sure," Harvey replied, a sudden inspiration flashing into his brain. "I may. I'm expecting a telephone message. Seen anything of anybody lately?"

There was a brief interchange of gossip. Harvey presently left the room, hesitated for a moment or two in the hall and finally, taking up his hat and stick, sent for a taxi and was driven to the Savoy. The first person whom he saw in the lounge, looking distinctly bored and rather forlorn, was Grace. She rose to her feet with a little exclamation of pleasure as she recognized him. Her whole appearance seemed suddenly transformed. Her eyes were shining. She came toward him eagerly.

"Why, dear friend," she cried, "what has happened? It is wonderful to see you so soon."

He held her hands for a moment. He understood now why he had read Mildred's letter with a curious sense of relief—a sense of relief which triumphed even over his anger—why he had turned his back upon his dismantled house almost light-heartedly.

"My wife has decided to go abroad for a time," he confided, "and I am a homeless wanderer. Under those circumstances I thought perhaps that we might lunch together."

"But how delightful!" she exclaimed. "I was just feeling so bored. I didn't care to go into the restaurant alone, so I was going out somewhere. Would you prefer me to change my traveling clothes, or shall I go like this?"

"Don't change a thing," he begged. "We'll go into the Grill Room. Lucky thing I came along. I know the sort of luncheon you were going to have—buns or a sticky omelette."

"Quite right!" she laughed. "And the pathos of it all would have been that I am really very hungry. May we have cantaloup and chicken Maryland instead?"

"You shall order, dear," he promised recklessly.

A bowing *maître d'hôtel* escorted them to their table. They ordered luncheon and afterward she leaned a little further toward him. Her eyes sought his wistfully.

"Is it horrid of me to be so glad?" she whispered. "Perhaps you are disappointed that your wife has gone away. It could not have been pleasant for you to find an empty house."

He laughed with sardonic mirth, which had still a note of reality in it.

"You can't imagine how empty it was," he confided, "or how glad I am."

That afternoon at half-past three Harvey was ushered with ceremony and alacrity into the manager's office of the Bermondsey branch of the Southern Bank. This time there was no doubt whatever as to the nature of his reception. Mr. Poulton kept closely in touch with the conditions of the business in which most of his clients were engaged, and his opinion of his visitor had changed to a very marked extent since the latter's previous visit.

"Glad to see you back again, Mr. Garrard," he declared, shaking his hand warmly and wheeling up the easy-chair. "I heard wonderful things about your going—stolen a march upon some of the cleverest of your competitors, they say."

"I don't know about that," Harvey replied. "I brought off the deal I went over to arrange."

"So far as one can tell from common report," the other observed, remembering his usual rule of caution, "you have made quite a coup. The McDermott Skin Company, isn't it, that you've bought up? Mr. Edgar Bass, who was in this morning, assured me that they were the cleverest manufacturers in the States."

"My people seemed pleased," Harvey remarked quietly. "I have just come from a conference with my salesmen. They tell me that they have already sold for immediate delivery over half of the entire stock we took over at a very considerable profit, and contracts for the weekly output of the firm are coming in by every post."

"Capital!" Mr. Poulton exclaimed. "You must permit me to congratulate you, Mr. Garrard. Things on this side, too, seem to have progressed in most satisfactory fashion during your absence. I have been seeing Mr. Greatorex most days, and you have been doing some amazing business here apart from this transaction. Of course the boom accounts for a great deal of it, but your sales have been prodigious. The extraordinary part of it is," the bank manager went on, "that according to common gossip you were the first to foresee the higher prices and to make enormous purchases. You will forgive my remarking upon it, but with your lack of experience this seems to me as it does to the rest of the trade almost inexplicable."

Harvey smiled.

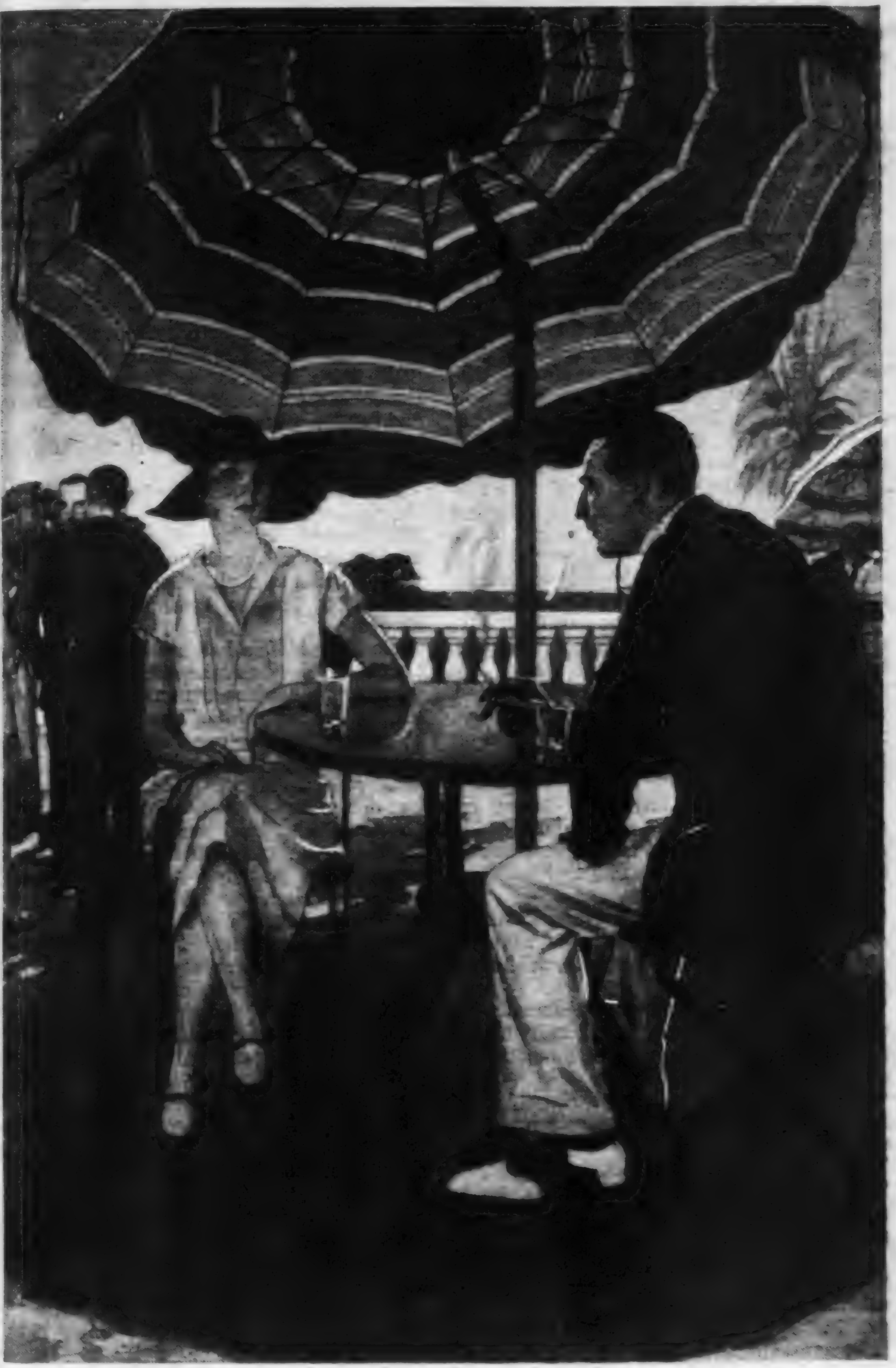
"IT ALL started in rather a peculiar way," he explained. "The firm, as you know, was not in particularly good shape when I came back, and when I looked into matters I found that the stock, which amounted to a very large sum, was overvalued, our travelers consequently were being undersold, and very little business was being done. I determined to face the loss, whatever it might be, rather than fall behind, and to reduce the price of our stock to market level, but to give us a chance of getting out I made offers at a little less than current prices for considerable quantities of the same merchandise with a view to leveling up. Our agent in America had no sooner commenced to operate than the boom began. I read all the trade papers I could find, talked over the position with my heads of departments, and we came to the conclusion that many descriptions of leather were far too low in price, and that there was something solid about the advances. Then, as you know, we went for it baldheaded."

"Have you any idea, if it is not an indiscreet question, what you have made during the last month?" the bank manager asked.

"I should say that when we have delivered the goods we have on order," Harvey replied coolly, "about a million. Then, of course, the stock instead of being twenty per cent. overvalued is now very largely increased in value. Apart from this the further developments of the McDermott business should bring us in at least another couple of hundred thousand pounds."

"Amazing!"

"Amazing it certainly is," Harvey agreed. "I'm not pretending that we haven't had marvelous luck, but I certainly never imagined that



"I have been disgracefully treated," she exclaimed. "I thought at least that he had too much good sense to advertise his peccadilloes like that."

business could be so fascinating to a mere novice as I have found it."

"And the future?"

"Well, the next thing we have to do is to put ourselves into a sound position for the time when the fall comes. We are taking steps at once to prepare for that."

"You anticipate a drop in prices, then?"

"I think that we have reached the top or very nearly the top. There has been no change for forty-eight hours, and you know as well as I do that prices seldom remain stationary for long. If they can't go any higher they must fall. From today on, although this is a profound secret, we have closed down our purchases. When I tell you that our stock is still ten times larger than the normal amount, you can see that we can afford to do so. Our attitude toward the trade is, that we can find no more material to buy and what we have we are distributing amongst our clients all over England. Whenever the slump comes we are going to anticipate it. We are going to sell faster than prices can drop. Our sales yesterday, I noticed, amounted to nearly fifty thousand pounds. Our purchase account is closed."

"You will forgive my remarking, Mr. Garrard," the manager observed, "that you remind me very much of your father in his younger days. He was the most sagacious and broad-minded business man I ever met, never afraid to tackle the biggest deal that could be suggested to him, but somehow or other always discounting his risk."

"Well, there we are, anyhow," Harvey remarked, arrived at last at the purpose of his visit. "I presume you find our account now in quite satisfactory shape, Mr. Poulton?"

"Absolutely."

"With reference to the American Treasury Bonds I deposited with you, if you have no objection I should like now to withdraw these."

"Certainly," the manager assented. "I should think there would be no difficulty about that at all. The matter shall be brought forward at our next Board Meeting.

"Can't I have them at once?" Harvey persisted. "I should like to take them away with me now."

The manager smiled.

"I'm afraid you can't do that," he regretted. "In the first place they are in the vaults at our head office, and furthermore they could only be parted with after the matter has come up before a meeting of the Board. I'll put your request through to headquarters, though, tonight."

Harvey rose to his feet.

"Please arrange this matter as quickly as possible for me," he begged. "The loan of the bonds to me was only a temporary affair and I should be glad to return them."

"I will do everything possible to expedite the matter," Mr. Poulton promised.

The two men shook hands and the manager escorted his valued client to the outside door. Harvey stepped into his car and made his way back to the warehouse, where something like pandemonium still appeared to reign. There were a dozen drays in the yard, every inch of the vast floor space seemed covered with bales and cases, young men in linen dusters were moving hurriedly about among the porters, and both lifts were working at high pressure. Harvey mounted slowly to the first floor, where the same scenes of activity prevailed and, entering his office, was suddenly conscious of a little wave of pleasure. Grace was already there, seated at a small desk close to his own, and bending over a typewriter.

"Why, I scarcely expected you this afternoon," he exclaimed.

"I thought I should like to come after all," she said, smiling up at him. "Your very nice Mr. Greatorex has been up here talking to me. He tells me that there are over a hundred letters which can not be dealt with until they have been referred to you, so I think that I shall be needed."

He hung up his hat and advanced toward his chair, slowly drawing off his gloves. There were certain obvious attractions about Grace—the flawless ivory tint of her cheeks, the natural but vivid red of her lips, her deep-set eyes with their changing lights which no possible art could conceal. It was clear, however, that she was doing her best to live up to her secretarial position. Her hair was brushed uncompromisingly away from her forehead and she had changed the smartly cut traveling dress she had worn at luncheon for a plain black one.

"You approve?" she asked, with a wrinkled forehead. "I hope so. I want to look just like your secretary, because you know I am here really to work. You know now that my shorthand is reliable. You must give me down all your letters into my book, and I will type them in another office where the noise will not disturb you."

"That seems sensible," he admitted.

"I do so want to be a real help to you," she went on quietly. "While I am here I just want to be your very useful secretary. I want to work hard, to take an interest in what I do, and to earn my salary. When we leave here and my day's work is over, it is a different matter. Then I can be to you just what you will."

Her voice had dropped, and a little thrill crept through him at the questioning light in her eyes.

"You are very sensible," he said, trying to speak in a matter-of-fact tone. "Our relations here then are established. I am the kindly employer. You are the industrious and ambitious secretary. To begin with I must ring for Greatorex. He can give me a digest of some of this correspondence without my going through every letter."

A rejuvenated Greatorex presently made his appearance. He accepted a chair and for an hour or so he and Harvey were engaged in earnest consultation. At the end of that time he disappeared with a portion of the correspondence and Harvey, turning toward Grace, began to dictate replies to the remainder. He continued for some time without a pause.

"Those are the most important ones," he announced. "Now we will arrange an office for you."

He rang a bell and gave orders to a clerk, who carried away the typewriter. Grace followed him, leaving the office without a backward glance, demure and business-like. As soon as he was alone, Harvey found some private note-paper, and, leaning back in his chair, once more read through his wife's letter. A sudden idea seized him. He spoke down to the clerk's office.

"Have some one ring up the office of Mr. Herbert Fardale, the banker, in Old Broad Street," he directed. "I wish to know whether he is in town and can be seen."

THE answer came five minutes later that Mr. Fardale was on the Continent and would be away for some weeks.

"Ask for his address," Harvey enjoined.

There was another pause, then the reply that Mr. Fardale's partner would be glad to speak to the inquirer. Harvey took up the telephone and exchanged a few curt amenities.

"I am anxious to get in touch with Mr. Fardale," he announced. "Can you give me his address abroad?"

"I am sorry to say that I can not," was the apologetic reply. "Mr. Fardale has gone back to the south of France, but no correspondence is forwarded and all matters of business are dealt with here."

"Thank you. I quite understand," Harvey declared, and rang off.

He dipped his pen in the ink and drew the paper toward him. For a long time he could get no further than "My dear Mildred." The difficulties of his task seemed suddenly to have increased. At last he began, and once started he wrote fluently:—

MY DEAR MILDRED:

I need scarcely say that your letter, handed to me by Andrews on my return, was a severe shock. Whoever your informant may have been, he was grievously mistaken both as to my position and intentions. It is true that on my return from the Riviera I found the business here in an exceedingly parlous state, but I am making a great effort to re-establish it, and I have every reason to believe that I am succeeding. Let me assure you that I am not in the habit of telling falsehoods, as you should know, and nothing was further from my thoughts when I left England, than to play the part of absconding bankrupt.

As regards your financial position, I must admit that it does not seem to me so pitiful as it apparently does to you. You have your income of two thousand a year which I made over to you at marriage. You have thirty thousand pounds, which I understand you have received for the sale of the house I gave you, and furniture, which, if sagaciously invested—and I have no doubt that you have excellent advice—should bring you in another fifteen hundred a year. I can not offer for the moment to increase this sum, but if I am successful in my present operations on behalf of the firm, I will consider the matter further.

I am bound to say, however, Mildred, that I consider your action in selling the house in my absence, and thereby turning me out of a home, selling, too, the furniture and my own personal treasures and belongings, to which you had no claim at all, an ill-advised and exceedingly selfish action. You have clearly shown that you have no desire to help me either by your sympathy or in any other way during this unexpected crisis with which I have been confronted. Your action has naturally caused me to review more carefully the nature of our relations, and you will no doubt agree with me when I say that these, for the last few years, have been exceedingly unsatisfactory. You appear to have lost any affection you might have had for me, and in view of your present behavior I cannot pretend that I still retain the feelings which I suppose we once upon a time both more or less shared. I do not know whether you wish to take steps to make our separation final. If so, I shall be glad to hear from you what you suggest. If, however, you wish to continue living under the shelter of my name I must remind you that I have a right to some voice as regards your choice of friends and residence. I will not say more until I hear from you again.

HARVEY.

He blotted and sealed his letter and sat for a few moments in deep thought. He was scarcely satisfied that he had been entirely honest, that he had said all that it was his duty to say. He knew perfectly well in his own mind that the one thing he desired was his freedom. He had given Mildred no hint as to this or as to the real cause of his own changed feeling. After all, though, if he had told her frankly of the other interest which had come into his life she would most certainly have heard of it with indifference. He had grown to discover her during these last few years as a woman without temperament, capacity for affection or desire for it, a woman immersed in the meretricious things of life and inspired by an innate and compelling selfishness. If he had asked her to set him free, her first impulse would have been to have made her consent the basis for a bargain.

The telephone bell rang. It was Mr. Poulton speaking from the bank.

"I have been in communication with headquarters, Mr. Garrard, with reference to the bonds," he said. "I do not imagine that there will be any difficulty about the matter but it will come up for discussion on Tuesday week."

"Why Tuesday week?" Harvey queried irritably. "My friend wants his securities back. Surely the position of my account justifies me in asking for them?"

"Certainly it does, Mr. Garrard," was the conciliatory reply, "but these things can scarcely be arranged in a minute. However, I'll see that the matter is pushed forward as fast as possible."

"The bonds are surely—"

Harvey stopped short, conscious of the soft opening of the door. He knew very well who it was upon the threshold.

"Very well," he concluded abruptly. "Don't let the matter be delayed beyond Tuesday week, however."

He replaced the receiver and rang off. For a moment he found it difficult to raise his head and face the advancing figure. She came in, closing the door behind her, and laid a little sheaf of letters before him. He took up his pen and for the first time looked at her. Her face was quite expressionless. She stood by his side, waiting. He drew a little breath of relief and began his task.

MR. HERBERT FARDALE, with the cares of Old Broad Street temporarily behind him, was becoming an object of some interest to the concierge and reception clerks at the Hotel Negresco at Nice. He had covered the distance between the swing-doors and the great semicircular lounge some fifty times and the scowl upon his face seemed in danger of becoming a permanent thing. At last, however, his patience was rewarded. The lift door was thrown open and Mildred made her dazzling appearance. As she approached, a gracious smile upon her lips, he felt his annoyance subside. Distinctly she was worth waiting for. Her costume of spotless white had come direct from Paris. From her black hat with its wonderful osprey to the tips of her patent-leather shoes she represented the last word in expense and fashion. It was one of the ambitions of Mr. Fardale's life to be seen about as often as possible with well turned-out women from the social world to which he aspired, and he felt his resentment pass as he raised her freshly manicured fingers to his lips.

"I haven't kept you waiting, have I?" she asked carelessly. "My masseuse was rather late this morning, and I was very lazy."

"Only three-quarters of an hour," he answered, leading the way to the door.

"As much as that?" she remarked. "Well, time does slip away, doesn't it, when one is getting ready? Where shall we lunch?"

"Wherever you like. The reserve at Beaulieu is closed, I am afraid. What do you say to going as far as Monte Carlo?"

"Delightful," she assented. "You can help me make some money then at 'chemie.'"

Mr. Fardale betrayed no particular enthusiasm at this latter prospect. His experience of helping his companion at the gaming table was that he provided the funds and suffered any loss, and she took the winnings if there were any. He was not disposed to start the day ungraciously, however.

"We might go into the Rooms for half-an-hour," he acquiesced, "or we might come back by the Upper Corniche and make a longer motor ride of it."

"We will see," Mildred murmured. "Have you any news from England this morning?"

"I had a great many letters," he replied, "but nothing that I should call news. Your husband rang me up, it seems, the day after he got back from America."

She frowned thoughtfully.

"I wonder why he did that?"

"He left no message. He simply asked for my address, which of course they wouldn't give him."

"What on earth did he want your address for? You have had no business transactions with him, have you?" she asked.

"None whatever," was the emphatic reply. "I took pretty good care of that. He called on me, as you know, to try and arrange a loan, very soon after they sent for him to come back to London, but I had to tell him pretty plainly that there was nothing doing without security."

"The business is still going on, isn't it?"

"Apparently so. I don't mind telling you, Mildred," Fardale continued, his manner denoting the interest which he undoubtedly felt in the subject, "that the situation's got me guessing. I don't understand it at all. I know all about your husband's business before he came to me. The information wasn't common property, but there's very little that goes on in the city that I don't know about and I had a straight tip that Garrard & Garrard were in a poor way. They're not a registered company, of course, like most of the big concerns nowadays, so they were able to keep their affairs to themselves—no public balance sheets or that sort of thing—but I had it from some one in the know that their bankers were putting the screw on. Looked pretty fishy, too, that he should have tried to borrow from me at all."

"He wouldn't have if he'd known," she remarked. "He isn't that sort?"

"Known what?" Fardale asked bluntly.

She looked at him with a faint smile.

"Of your pretensions."

"Pretensions," he scoffed. "You've used the right word for once. Look here, Mildred, I don't want to make you angry like you were last time—"

"We were discussing Harvey's business," she interrupted.

He relapsed for a moment into surly silence.

"Very well, then," he agreed at last, "we will finish with that before I say a word about the other matter. Tell me this: has your husband had any commercial training at all? Has he any head for figures—any knowledge of this business of his?"

"None whatever, I should say," she acknowledged. "I have never known him attempt to keep any sort of accounts. I should say from the way I've seen him throw money about that he had no sense of its value at all."

"Then he's got me licked," Fardale admitted.

"In what way?"

"Why, there's a lot of talk about it in the city. He seems to have started what must be nothing more nor less than a tremendous gamble. He is trying to force the price of leather up by enormous purchases—the Americans would call it trying to corner the market. He can't possibly bring it off. It isn't likely that the trade would let an ignoramus step in and beat them at their own game. He must be gambling so as to get his hand on some money. I should say he'll be very lucky if he keeps out of prison."

She looked absently across the Mediterranean; a placid stretch of oily, cobalt blue. There was scarcely a breath of wind stirring.

"It all sounds terrible," she sighed. "And you know how I hate scandal of any sort. It would be so much better if he just disappeared quietly, but then, like nearly every one else nowadays, he is so very, very selfish. Do you know how much money he left me when he went abroad?"

"No idea."

"Five hundred pounds," she confided slowly and scornfully.

"What—to pay the household accounts with?"

"Don't be ridiculous!" she scoffed. "Mr. Greatorex, the cashier, pays me so much a month for that."

"For your private allowance, then?"

"Harvey makes me no allowance at all," she announced impressively, "not one penny piece!"

He was puzzled but persistent.

"Then where do your frocks come from and that sort of thing?" he demanded.

"I am not absolutely a pauper," she said coldly. "I have a small settlement, and I have to dress out of that. However, don't let's talk about these things any longer. It is such a beautiful morning that I want to forget all my worries."

"The morning's all right," he admitted gloomily.

"I am pleased, too, with the gowns Molyneux has sent me from Paris this time," she went on. "I was afraid I hadn't given them enough time, but they have really done very well. This gown, for instance, is absolutely correct."

He looked at her, unwilling admiration in his eyes. She was certainly beautifully turned out.

"I believe you think more about your clothes than of anything else in the world," he complained.

"What else is there worth thinking about?" she asked. "Gambling only amuses me when I wish, and games bore me. I am very fond of dancing, of course, but one can't have that all the time."

Fardale frowned. He was a bad dancer, as she had more or less delicately contrived to hint to him on various occasions.

"There are people, human beings," he pointed out. "Don't they interest you?"

"Not much," she admitted. "I don't seem to get on very well with women, and most men are so selfish.

"Am I selfish?" he demanded.

She sighed.

"I am afraid you are just the same as the rest."

"I like that," he grumbled. "Fancy calling me selfish, when I have left my business and all my friends just to come down here after the season is over to be with you."

"But my dear man," she protested, "that is no proof of unselfishness. You have come because you wanted to. Isn't that so?"

"Oh, more or less, I dare say," he assented grudgingly, "but it seems to me that I might just as well have stayed in London."

"Really!" she murmured.

"I came here to be with you," he went on. "I came because—well, put it how you like—I came because I'm fond of you. How much do I see of you? You make me stay at another hotel. You have a beautiful suite at the Negresco—I chose the best in the hotel for you—and I am not allowed even to come up to your sitting-room. I am permitted to call about midday to take you out to luncheon, drive with you in the afternoon, part with you then whilst you have two or three hours' rest, fetch you for dinner, help you with your gambling and take you back to the hotel at midnight."

"Well, surely you see enough of me all that time?" she exclaimed.

FARDALE was secretly very much in awe of his companion, but for once he forgot the fact.

"Do you suppose that any man in the world," he demanded, "would be content to dance attendance upon a woman for what you give me?"

She looked at him with an amused smile.

"My dear man," she expostulated, "don't be ridiculous. What else could I give you? Can't you understand that now I have left him Harvey will have me watched, especially if he knows that you are down here? He must have been suspicious, or he wouldn't have rung up. I ought to be very, very careful."

"I don't like your husband," he confided, "but I don't think he's the sort of man to have his wife watched."

"A woman in my position must run no risks," she insisted. "When Harvey's bankruptcy does come, I shall of course expect him to divorce me. He could scarcely be so selfish as to refuse. After that I shall be my own mistress."

"And meantime?"

"Isn't all this very pleasant?" she asked, almost plaintively. "You spend as much of your time as is possible with me. I do not encourage attentions from any other man."

"So you think that's enough?"

"It is as much as is possible."

"It's nothing of the sort," he contradicted bruskly. "You know very well that most of the women—even in your own particular little set—I could mention half a dozen of them—have their little love affairs, especially when they're down here. There's your great friend, Lady Palethorpe."

"Dear Mary is so indiscreet," Mildred murmured.

"She had pluck enough to do what she wants to, anyway," he declared. "She doesn't keep that chap Burnley hanging around her for nothing all the time."

Mildred shivered slightly.

"You're becoming coarse," she complained. "Dear me, isn't it amazing how many people stay on here?" she added, with an air of relief, as the car swung round and drew up in front of the Hotel de Paris. "It isn't quite luncheon-time, is it? I want to call at Janetsky's for a moment. We could walk up, if you like."

Fardale dismissed the car and they strolled on to the corner of the Place. Mildred paused to look in at the window of the famous jeweler.

"I have to call for a little brooch they are repairing for me," she explained, "but really I almost dread going in. They have such beautiful things. Do look at those diamond earrings. Just what I have been longing for!"

For once her companion was unresponsive. She sighed gently and moved toward the door.

"I'll wait outside," he suggested. "I've been rather looking forward to a cigaret."

"Just as you like," she acquiesced coldly.

On the threshold she hesitated. Fardale had drawn out his cigaret case.

"You know how I hate going in to these places alone," she protested a little petulantly. "If you will come in with me, I will go up with you afterward to that bar you are so fond of and you shall smoke a cigaret while we have a cocktail."

He put back his case and followed her into the shop, paid without protest for the repair to her brooch and stood by nonchalantly while she asked to see the diamond earrings. Mildred for the next few minutes was in her element. There was a new interest in her face, almost a tenderness in her touch as she held the earrings up and examined them at every possible angle.

"They are very, very beautiful," she told the shopman, "but alas, they are far too expensive for poor me. Fifty thousand francs seems nothing nowadays, but I shall have to deny myself."

Fardale's attention had suddenly wandered to a newspaper lying upon the glass counter. He gave vent to a little exclamation.

"Where did you get this from?" he asked the jeweler's assistant abruptly.

The man turned toward him.

"I really couldn't say, sir," he replied. "An American gentleman who was in a few minutes ago must have left it."

Fardale smiled. He spread out the sheet and tapped the photographs at the head of one of the columns with his forefinger.

"Look here, Mildred," he begged.

She glanced over his shoulder, carelessly enough at first, then with surprised interest. At the top of the column were curiously good photographs of Harvey and Grace. She read the thick black headline with amazement:

> HARVEY GARRARD, the English merchant prince, departs on the *Berengaria*, having made huge purchases of leather on this side. He is accompanied by his beautiful secretary, granddaughter of Ebenezer Swayle, John's River millionaire, who died a few weeks ago in London. Miss Swayle says she has enjoyed immensely her first trip to her native country.

"Did you know that your husband has a secretary who looks like a film star?" he inquired.

"I have never heard of her in my life," was the indignant disclaimer. "What on earth can Harvey be wanting with a secretary? He hasn't been in business five minutes."

Even the earrings were for the moment forgotten. She stared at the pictures, read a few lines of the letter press, folded the paper up and with it in her hand turned toward the door. Fardale smiled as he prepared to follow her.

"Madame may perhaps return," he told the jeweler's assistant. "You go and talk to your principal. Ask him what about thirty-five thousand cash."

The young man shook his head, but Fardale had already departed, swinging his gold-headed lacca cane. Mildred turned obediently with him up the street. He could see the signs of anger still in her face, the compressed lips and a steely glint in her eyes.

"I am afraid," he remarked, "that you have had rather a wrong idea about your husband. He lets himself go a bit all right, like the rest of us—and by Jove, the girl is pretty!"

SHE made no reply. They climbed up to the palisaded café and seated themselves underneath one of the striped umbrellas. A waiter served them with cocktails in frosted glasses and Fardale lit a cigaret. He was in no hurry to talk. Mildred drank her cocktail with unusual gusto, and made no protest when he ordered a second.

"I have been disgracefully treated," she exclaimed at last. "I think that Harvey's behavior is atrocious. I thought at least that he had too much good taste to advertise his peccadilloes like that."

"Seems a little cool, eh?" her companion agreed. "I think he might have drawn the line at posing for the photographer."

"Did you know anything about this?" she demanded.

"I had heard rumors," he lied.

She sipped her second cocktail thoughtfully. He leaned forward in his chair.

"Those earrings weren't so bad," he began tentatively.

Some of the hardness left her face. Nevertheless he lost his nerve under her steady regard.

"We might look at them again this afternoon," he suggested.

She toyed for a moment with the jade handle of her parasol. Then she looked suddenly up.

"Very well," she consented graciously.

Fardale arrived in the Negresco Hotel about ten minutes to eight on the same evening having the air of a man well satisfied with himself and the world. He was sleek and exceedingly well-groomed. The aroma of the coiffeur's shop hung about him insistently. He glanced at his watch and noting the time made his way to the American bar and sipped with evident enjoyment a cunningly mixed cocktail. At eight o'clock precisely he left the place and made his way toward the lift. He found, however, a surprise awaiting him. Just as his finger was outstretched toward the bell a familiar figure arose from an easy-chair, and Mildred, looking absolutely at her best in a black gown with diamond pendant and earrings, came toward him. He greeted her in dumb surprise.

"My dear man," she confided, glancing around to be sure that they were not overheard, "a most embarrassing thing has happened. The Prince and Princess Lutinoff have arrived, and are staying in the very next suite to mine."

His face hardened at once.

"Well, what of it?" he demanded.

"You must see," she went on, resting her fingers upon his arm in conciliatory fashion, "that a *diner-à-deux* is impossible. I haven't seen Adele for an age and she simply insisted upon my dining."

"You are dining with them?" he asked ominously.

"Don't be foolish," she enjoined. "You are dining, too, of course. I told them that we were dining together in the restaurant. The Prince is most anxious to meet you."

Fardale, who loved princes, was a little mollified.

"Who are they?" he asked. "One sees the name in the papers often enough, of course—but I mean what language do they speak? You know my French is rotten."

"You needn't worry at all," she assured him. "The Princess is an American—one of the best families and a very old friend of mine. The Prince is a Russian but he has lived most of his life on the Continent. He was Military Attaché in London for three years. Now you'll be sweet and agreeable to them, won't you?"

"Of course I will," he promised. "Rather hard luck, though, when I thought I was going to have you all to myself. What about—"

She drew him toward the lounge.

"Listen," she said, interrupting him, "I want you to read a letter I have just received from Harvey. I told them dinner at half-past eight, so that we should have a few minutes to ourselves first. I want your advice."

He adjusted a massive horn-rimmed eyeglass, read the letter and passed it back without comment.

"What do you think of that?" she demanded.

"I should say," he replied, "that it was the result of his trip to America. Leaves you a pretty free hand, eh?"

HER fingers clutched the letter nervously. Then she stuffed it into the platinum and gold bag she was carrying.

"I should never have believed," she declared, "that any man breathing could have treated a woman as Harvey is treating me. I can scarcely bear to talk about it. I have been absolutely ill since I got home. Celeste made me lie down after my bath and gave me a little massage. Fortunately, I fell asleep. I am perfectly convinced, Herbert, that that girl is at the bottom of it all—a girl whom he has never even mentioned to me, mind."

"I shouldn't be surprised," Fardale agreed. "What are you going to do about it?"

"I came to you for your advice," she reminded him. "Of course, what I should really like to know," she went on confidentially, "is whether Harvey is going to pull this business together again. Supposing, by any chance, he did and made an income again worth having, is there any way by which I could get my fair share if I divorced him?"

"It would be difficult," he admitted. "You would get something, of course, but nothing like . . . However," he broke off, "it's fifty to one against your husband getting out of the wood at all."

"In that case he'd have to give me something of what he earned afterward, or of what he got out of the wreck, wouldn't he?" she asked anxiously.

Herbert Fardale was called a hard man. He looked at his companion curiously.

[*Continued on page 168*]

A Fiction Feature Extraordinary

The OLD or the NEW

Two memorable boy stories are reprinted in the following pages: *The Fight*, by Stephen Crane, and *Little Gentleman*, by Booth Tarkington

THIS department feature presents each month two fiction stories of exceptional merit that have appeared elsewhere in print. As a rule, one story is either a short masterpiece of enduring fame that has long survived its author or a tale published years ago but having a persistent appeal because it has made an unforgetable impression on discriminating fiction readers. Along with it is presented, for comparison, a story of similar character, either by a living author or one who wrote in the spirit of our time.

The following names of authors are indications of the variety and quality of the stories published in this department in past months:

Prosper Mérimée
Edward Everett Hale
Richard Harding Davis
James B. Connolly
Edgar Allan Poe
Owen Wister
W. W. Jacobs
H. C. Bunner
Frank R. Stockton
Robert Louis Stevenson
O. Henry
Stephen Crane
H. G. Wells
Nathaniel Hawthorne
Ben Ames Williams
Gouverneur Morris
Wilkie Collins
Edith Wharton
Joseph Conrad
James Hopper
Donn Byrne
Eugene O'Neil
Katherine Mansfield
Joseph C. Lincoln

In making selections from published fiction the first requirement is story interest—the fame of the author is secondary. The editors want to make the stories as representative as possible and will gratefully consider your suggestions.

The Authors

Stephen Crane

WHEN Stephen Crane, aged twenty-eight, wrote his "Whilomville Stories" there was no model for good ones about real boys in our up-to-date, everyday life. There was "Huckleberry Finn" and "Tom Sawyer," but no one had pointed them out as classics; they were yarns, often funny and sometimes exciting, by that comical lowbrow, Mark Twain. Besides, Tom was wholly real only by spells, and Huck, who always was, moved in far-away-and-long-ago scenes and through blood-and-thunderous adventures as unparalleled in a Whilomville as those of D'Artagnan or the Black Prince. Otherwise, there were at one extreme Young Surefoot, Fred Fearnot & Co., and at the other, heading multitudes of goody-goodies, an exile in curls and velvet. "If the Whilomville stories," wrote Crane to a friend, "seem like 'Little Lord Fauntleroy' to you, you are demented. . . . No kid except a sick little girl would like Lord Fauntleroy." He had read "Huckleberry Finn," but all that is known of what he thought of it is that he could not abide the ending.

He certainly didn't imitate it. He imitated nothing, unless Tolstoy's effort to be, as an artist, detached in viewing life. On the contrary, he set patterns, of which "Whilomville" is one that has been widely followed. The readers of its day didn't take to it. They liked their backgrounds dreamed more, and as for Jimmie Trescott, that kid was a little too real for their peace of mind. But most of the fairly real boys in our subsequent fiction are his descendants. Booth Tarkington has acknowledged Penrod's heritage. Crane, whose great shipwreck story, "The Open Boat," has appeared in this series, was born in Newark, New Jersey, in 1871 and died of tuberculosis at a German health resort in his thirtieth year. Three of his books are worth reading only if you have a special interest in him; the other seven are, or contain, additions to literature. His life and personality, which are fascinating and were much misunderstood, are brilliantly revealed in "Stephen Crane," the study by Thomas Beer.

Booth Tarkington

BOOTH TARKINGTON, who for some time had been called the Dean of American Letters, in succession to William Dean Howells, was born, in Indianapolis, a year and a half before Crane was born, but being less a "prodigy" did not emerge as author until the last year of Crane's life. In Princeton they knew he was talented and expected to hear from him, later, things more momentous than his singing of Kipling's ballads. They had quite a wait. He went home and, because of his shyness, experimented almost secretly at writing; he hadn't a living to earn and could be deliberate. At thirty he had finished two novels. With their great popularity in mind, it is hard to believe, but a number of editors and publishers rejected them. Then Colonel Sam McClure saw one. Even he was slow to accept a historical romance unhappily ended; he asked to see something else, and "The Gentleman from Indiana" was forthcoming. Having serialized that amid applause, he took a chance with the other, "Beaucaire"—and the "idler" in Indianapolis was made.

"Beaucaire" is the prettiest flowering of that rather sad-sweet sentiment that overgrows all Mr. Tarkington's earlier work. "The Gentleman" has it, and has in addition the budding of his maturity's realism. Toward 1910 he temporarily disappeared from view, but about the time it was settled that he was "through" and what a pity, he returned with "The Flirt," which contains Hedrick Madison, the best real boy in our fiction since Twain's and Crane's. Could Hedrick be extracted from the novel he enlivens, he and not Penrod Schofield would represent their creator here—but Penrod, in the first set of stories, is no bad substitute. Everybody knows Mr. Tarkington's later fiction and some of his plays, his fondness for French poodles, his division of his time between Indianapolis and Kennebunkport, Maine. Most critics hold that his very finest work is in "Alice Adams." Few appear to have read the delicious "Harlequin and Columbine," which he long suppressed as a book, since he thought it unfair to the stage and actors.

THE FIGHT

The story of a painful crisis in schoolyard circles where a stranger is just naturally an enemy

By Stephen Crane

Illustrated by Peter Newell

(Reprinted. See announcement on page 102.)

THE child life of the neighborhood was sometimes moved in its deeps at the sight of wagon-loads of furniture arriving in front of some house which, with closed blinds and barred doors, had been for a time a mystery, or even a fear. The boys often expressed this fear by stamping bravely and noisily on the porch of the house, and then suddenly darting away with screams of nervous laughter, as if they expected to be pursued by something uncanny. There was a group who held that the cellar of a vacant house was certainly the abode of robbers, smugglers, assassins, mysterious masked men in council about the dim rays of a candle, and possessing skulls, emblematic bloody daggers, and owls. Then, near the first of April, would come along a wagon-load of furniture, and children would assemble on the walk by the gate and make serious examination of everything that passed into the house, and taking no thought whatever of masked men.

One day it was announced in the neighborhood that a family was actually moving into the Hannigan house, next door to Doctor Trescott's. Jimmie was one of the first to be informed, and by the time some of his friends came dashing up he was versed in much.

"Any boys?" they demanded, eagerly.

"Yes," answered Jimmie, proudly. "One's a little feller, and one's 'most as big as me. I saw 'em, I did."

"Where are they?" asked Willie Dalzel, as if under the circumstances he could not take Jimmie's word, but must have the evidence of his senses.

"Oh, they're in there," said Jimmie, carelessly. It was evident that he owned these new boys.

Willie Dalzel resented Jimmie's proprietary way.

"Ho!" he cried, scornfully. "Why don't they come out, then? Why don't they come out?"

"How d' I know?" said Jimmie.

"Well," retorted Willie Dalzel, "you seemed to know so thundering much about 'em."

At the moment a boy came strolling down the gravel walk which led from the front door to the gate. He was about the height and age of Jimmie Trescott, but he was thick through the chest and had fat legs. His face was round and rosy and plump, but his hair was curly black, and his brows were naturally darkling, so that he resembled both a pudding and a young bull.

He approached slowly the group of older inhabitants, and they had grown profoundly silent. They looked him over; he looked them over. They might have been savages observing the first white man, or white men observing the first savage. The silence held steady.

As he neared the gate the strange boy wandered off to the left in a definite way, which proved his instinct to make a circular voyage when in doubt. The motionless group stared at him. In time this unsmiling scrutiny worked upon him somewhat, and he leaned against the fence and fastidiously examined one shoe.

In the end Willie Dalzel authoritatively broke the stillness. "What's your name?" said he, gruffly.

"Johnnie Hedge 'tis," answered the new boy. Then came another great silence while Whilomville pondered this intelligence.

Again came the voice of authority: "Where'd you live b'fore?"

"Jersey City."

These two sentences completed the first section of the formal code. The second section concerned itself with the establishment of the newcomer's exact position in the neighborhood.

"I kin lick you," announced Willie Dalzel, and awaited the answer.

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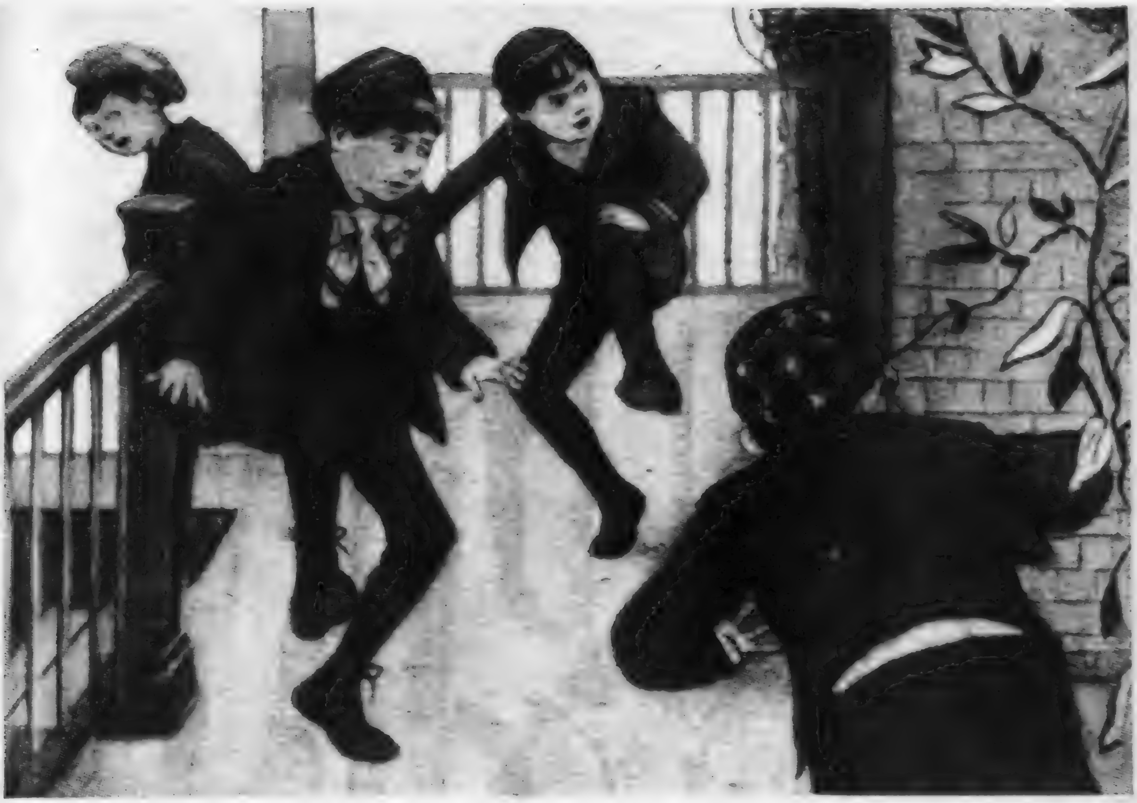


The boys often expressed their fear by stamping bravely and noisily on the porch, and then suddenly darting away with screams of nervous laughter, as if pursued by something uncanny.

The Hedge boy had stared at Willie Dalzel, but he stared at him again. After a pause he said, "I know you kin."

"Well," demanded Willie, "kin *he* lick you?" And he indicated Jimmie Trescott with a sweep which announced plainly that Jimmie was the next in prowess.

Whereupon the new boy looked at Jimmie respectfully but carefully, and at length said, "I dun'no'."

This was the signal for an outburst of shrill screaming, and everybody pushed Jimmie forward. He knew what he had to say, and, as befitted the occasion, he said it fiercely: "Kin you lick me?"

THE new boy also understood what he had to say, and, despite his unhappy and lonely state, he said it bravely: "Yes."

"Well," retorted Jimmie, bluntly, "come out and do it, then! Jest come out and do it!" And these words were greeted with cheers. These little rascals yelled that there should be a fight at once. They were in bliss over the prospect. "Go on, Jim! Make 'im come out. He said he could lick you. Aw-aw-aw! He said he could lick you!" There probably never was a fight among this class in Whilomville which was not the result of the goading and guying of two proud lads by a populace of urchins who simply wished to see a show.

Willie Dalzel was very busy. He turned first to the one and then to the other. "You said you could lick him. Well, why don't you come out and do it, then? You said you could lick him, didn't you?"

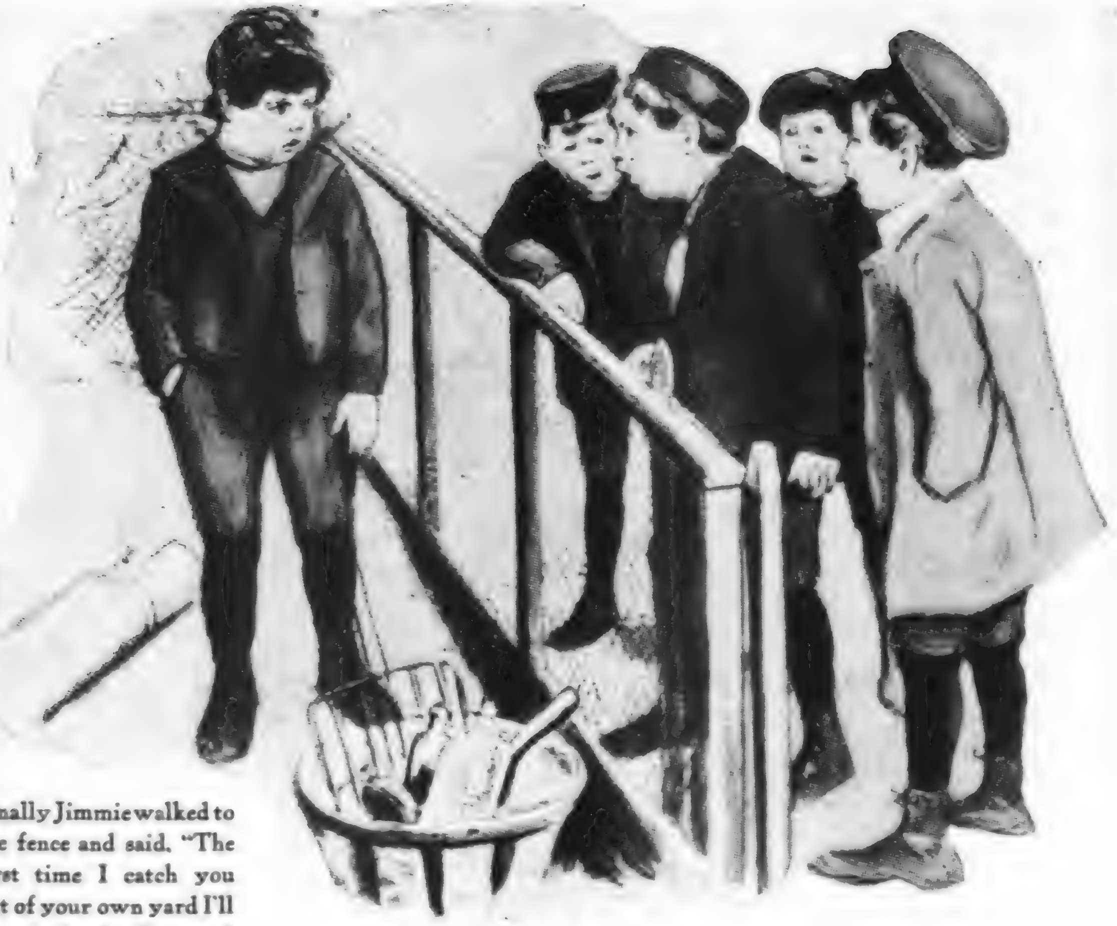
"Yes," answered the new boy, dogged and dubious.

Willie tried to drag Jimmie by the arm. "Aw, go on, Jimmie! You ain't afraid, are you?"

"No," said Jimmie.

The two victims opened wide eyes at each other. The fence separated them, and so it was impossible for them to immediately engage; but they seemed to understand that they were ultimately to be sacrificed to the ferocious aspirations of the other boys, and each scanned the other to learn something of his spirit. They were not angry at all. They were merely two little gladiators who were being clamorously told to hurt each other. Each displayed hesitation and doubt without displaying fear. They did not exactly understand what were their feelings, and they moodily kicked the ground and made low and sullen answers to Willie Dalzel, who worked like a circus-manager.

"Aw, go on, Jim! What's the matter with you? You ain't afraid, are you? Well, then, say something." This sentiment received more cheering from the abandoned little wretches who wished to be entertained, and in this



Finally Jimmie walked to the fence and said, "The first time I catch you out of your own yard I'll lam the head off'n you."

cheering there could be heard notes of derision of Jimmie Trescott. The latter had a position to sustain; he was well known; he often bragged of his willingness and ability to thrash other boys; well, then, here was a boy of his size who said that he could not thrash him. What was he going to do about it? The crowd made these arguments very clear, and repeated them again and again.

Finally Jimmie, driven to aggression, walked close to the fence and said to the new boy, "The first time I catch you out of your own yard, I'll lam the head off'n you!" This was received with wild plaudits by the Whilomville urchins.

But the new boy stepped back from the fence. He was awed by Jimmie's formidable mien. But he managed to get out a semi-defiant sentence. "Maybe you will, and maybe you won't," said he.

However, his short retreat was taken as a practical victory for Jimmie, and the boys hooted him bitterly. He remained inside the fence, swinging one foot and scowling, while Jimmie was escorted off down the street amid acclamations. The new boy turned and walked back toward the house, his face gloomy, lined deep with discouragement, as if he felt that the new environment's antagonism and palpable cruelty were sure to prove too much for him.

The mother of Johnnie Hedge was a widow, and the chief theory of her life was that her boy should be in school on the greatest possible number of days. He himself had no sympathy with this ambition, but she detected the truth of his diseases with an unerring eye, and he was required to be really ill before he could win the right to disregard the first bell, morning and noon. The chicken-pox and the mumps had given him vacations—vacations of misery, wherein he nearly died between pain and nursing. But bad colds in the head did nothing for him, and he was not able to invent a satisfactory hacking cough. His mother was not consistently a tartar. In most things he swayed her to his will. He was allowed to have more jam, pickles, and pie than most boys; she respected his profound loathing of Sunday school; on summer evenings he could remain out-of-doors until 8:30; but in this matter of school she was inexorable. This single point in her character was of steel.

THE Hedges arrived in Whilomville on a Saturday, and on the following Monday, Johnnie wended his way to school with a note to the principal and his Jersey City schoolbooks. He knew perfectly well that he would be told to buy new and different books, but in those days mothers always had an idea that old books would "do," and they invariably sent boys off to a new school with books which would not meet the selected and unchangeable views of the new administration. The old books never would "do." Then the boys brought them home to annoyed mothers and asked for ninety cents or sixty cents or eight-five cents or some number of cents for another outfit. In the garret of every house holding a large family there was a collection of effete school-books, with mother rebellious because James could not inherit his books from Paul, who should properly be Peter's heir, while Peter should be a beneficiary under Henry's will.

But the matter of the books was not the measure of Johnnie Hedge's unhappiness. This whole business of changing schools was a complete torture. Alone he had to go among a new people, a new tribe, and he apprehended his serious time. There were only two fates for him. One meant victory. One meant a kind of serfdom in which he would subscribe to every word of some superior boy and support his every word. It was not anything like an English system of fagging, because boys invariably drifted into the figurative service of other boys whom they devotedly admired, and if they were obliged to subscribe to everything, it is true that they would have done so freely in any case. One means to suggest that Johnnie Hedge had to find his place. Willie Dalzel was a type of the little chieftain, and Willie was a master, but he was not a bully in a special physical sense. He did not drag little boys by the ears until they cried, nor make them tearfully fetch and carry for him. They fetched and carried, but it was because of their worship of his prowess and genius. And so all through the strata of boy life were chieftains and subchieftains and assistant subchieftains. There was no question of little Hedge being towed about by the nose; it was, as one has said, that he had to find his place in a new school. And this in itself was a problem which awed his boyish heart. He was a stranger cast away upon the moon. None knew him, understood him, felt for him. He would be surrounded for this initiative time by a horde of jackal creatures who might turn out in the end to be little boys like himself, but this last point his philosophy could not understand in its fulness.

He came to a white meeting-house sort of a place, in the squat tower of which a great bell was clanging impressively. He passed through an iron gate into a playground worn bare as the bed of a mountain brook by the endless runnings and scufflings of little children. There was still a half hour before the final clangor in the squat tower, but the playground held a number of frolicsome imps. A loitering boy espied Johnnie Hedge, and he howled: "Oh! oh! Here's a new feller! Here's a new feller!" He advanced upon the strange arrival. "What's your name?" he demanded, belligerently, like a particularly offensive custom-house officer.

"Johnnie Hedge," responded the newcomer shyly.

This name struck the other boy as being very comic. All new names strike boys as being comic. He laughed noisily.

"Oh, fellers, he says his name is Johnnie Hedge! Haw! haw! haw!"

The new boy felt that his name was the most disgraceful thing which had ever been attached to a human being.

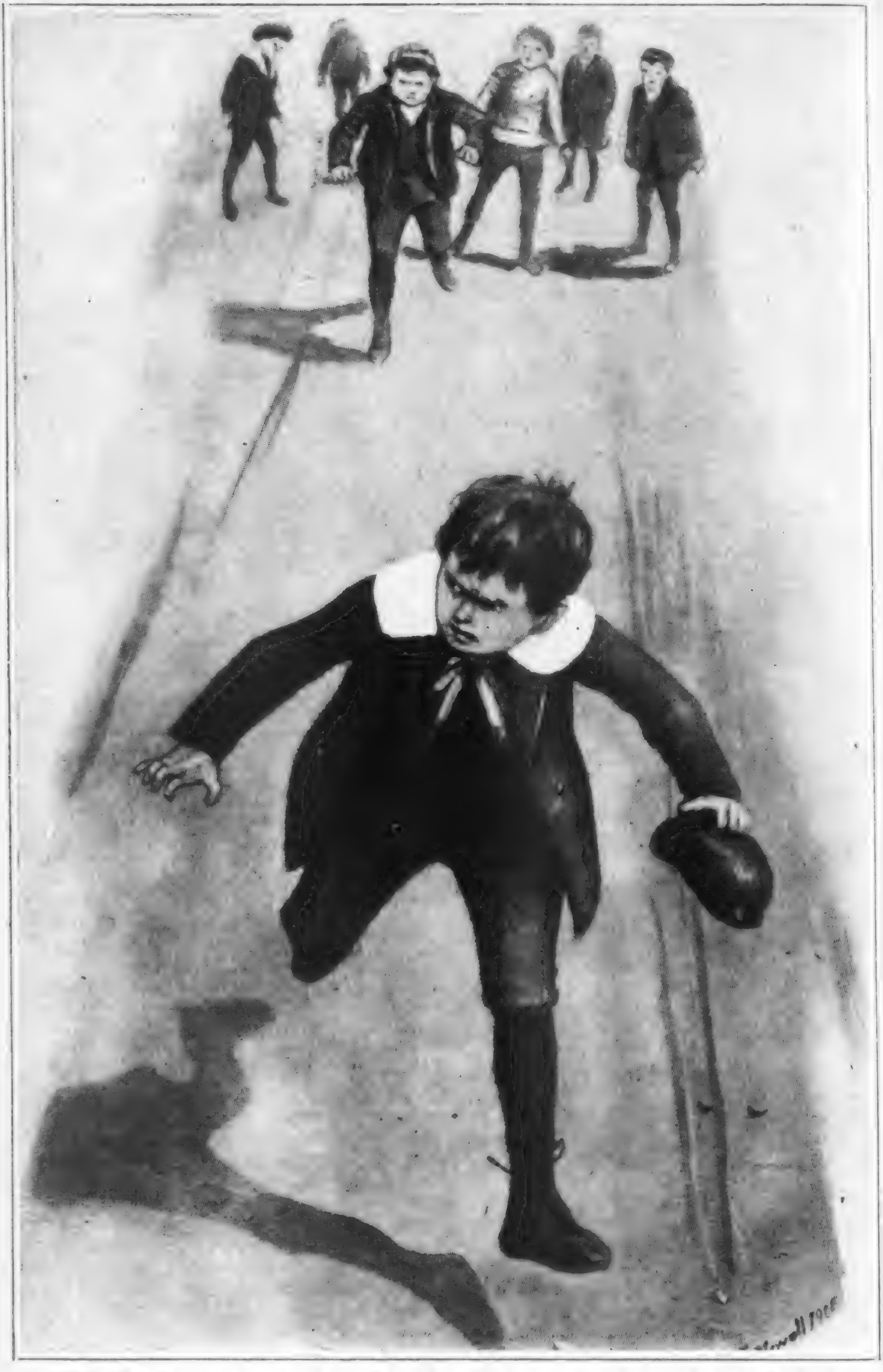
"Johnnie Hedge! Haw! haw! What room you in?" said the other lad.

"I dun'no'," said Johnnie. In the meantime a small flock of interested vultures had gathered about him. The main thing was his absolute strangeness. He even would have welcomed the sight of his tormentors of Saturday; he had seen them before at least. These creatures were only so many incomprehensible problems. He diffidently began to make his way toward the main door of the school, and the other boys followed him. They demanded information.

"ARE you through substraction yet? We study jogerfre—did you, ever? You live here now? You goin' to school here now?"

To many questions he made answer as well as the clamor would permit, and at length he reached the main door and went quaking unto his new kings. As befitted them, the rabble stopped at the door. A teacher strolling along a corridor found a small boy holding in his hand a note. The boy palpably did not know what to do with the note, but the teacher knew, and took it. Thereafter this little boy was in harness.

A splendid lady in gorgeous robes gave him a seat at a double desk, at the end of which sat a hoodlum with grimy finger-nails, who eyed the inauguration with an extreme and personal curiosity. The other desks were gradually occupied by children, who first were told of the new boy, and then turned upon him a speculative and somewhat derisive eye. The school opened; little classes went forward to a position in front of the teacher's platform and tried to explain that they knew something. The new boy was not requisitioned a great deal; he was allowed to lie dormant until he became used to the scenes and until the teacher found, approximately, his mental position. In the meantime he suffered a shower of stares and whispers and giggles, as if he were a man-ape, whereas he was precisely like other children. From time to time he made funny and pathetic little overtures to other boys, but these overtures could not yet be received; he was not known; he was a foreigner. The village school was like a nation.



Willie Dalzel ran as a man might run from the sudden appearance of a vampire or a ghoul or a gorilla. This was no time for academics—he ran.

It was tight. Its amiability or friendship must be won in certain ways.

At recess he hovered in the schoolroom around the weak lights of society and around the teacher, in the hope that somebody might be good to him, but none considered him save as some sort of a specimen. The teacher of course had a secondary interest in the fact that he was an additional one to a class of sixty-three.

At twelve o'clock, when the ordered files of boys and girls marched toward the door, he exhibited—to no eye—the tremblings of a coward in a charge. He exaggerated the lawlessness of the playground and the street.

But the reality was hard enough. A shout greeted him:

"Oh, here's the new feller. Here's the new feller!"

SMALL and utterly obscure boys teased him. He had a hard time of it to get to the gate. There never was any actual hurt, but everything was competent to smite the lad with shame. It was a curious, groundless shame, but nevertheless it was shame. He was a newcomer, and he definitely felt the disgrace of the fact. In the street he was seen and recognized by some lads who had formed part of the group of Saturday. They shouted:

"Oh, Jimmie! Jimmie! Here he is! Here's that new feller!"

Jimmie Trescott was going virtuously toward his luncheon when he heard these cries behind him. He pretended not to hear, and in this deception he was assisted by the fact that he was engaged at the time in a furious argument with a friend over the relative merits of two "Uncle Tom's Cabin" companies. It appeared that one company had only two bloodhounds, while the other had ten. On the other hand, the first company had two *Topsys* and two *Uncle Toms*, while the second had only one *Topsy* and one *Uncle Tom*.

But the shouting little boys were hard after him. Finally they were even pulling at his arms.

"Jimmie—"

"What?" he demanded, turning with a snarl. "What d'you want? Leggo my arm!"

"Here he is! Here's the new feller! Here's the new feller! Now!"

"I don't care if he is," said Jimmie, with grand impatience. He tilted his chin. "I don't care if he is."

Then they reviled him. "Thought you was goin' to lick him first time you caught him! Yah! You're a 'fraid-cat!" They began to sing: "'Fraid-cat! 'Fraid-cat! 'Fraid-cat!" He expostulated hotly, turning from one to the other, but they would not listen. In the meantime the Hedge boy slunk on his way, looking with deep anxiety upon this attempt to send Jimmie against him. But Jimmie would have none of the plan.

When the children met again on the playground, Jimmie was openly challenged with cowardice. He had made a big threat in the hearing of comrades, and when invited by them to take advantage of an opportunity, he had refused. They had been fairly sure of their amusement, and they were indignant. Jimmie was finally driven to declare that as soon as school was out for the day he would thrash the Hedge boy.

When finally the children came rushing out of the iron gate, filled with the delights of freedom, a hundred boys surrounded Jimmie in high spirits, for he had said that he was determined. They waited for the lone lad from Jersey City. When he appeared, Jimmie wasted no time. He walked straight to him and said, "Did you say you kin lick me?"

Johnnie Hedge was cowed, shrinking, affrighted, and the roars of a hundred boys thundered in his ears, but again he knew what he had to say, "Yes," he gasped, in anguish.

"Then," said Jimmie, resolutely, "you've got to fight." There was a joyous clamor by the mob. The beleaguered lad looked this way and that way for succor, as Willie Dalzel and other officious youngsters policed an irregular circle in the crowd. He saw Jimmie facing him; there was no help for it; he dropped his books—the old books which would not "do."

Now it was the fashion among tiny Whilomville belligerents to fight much in the manner of little bear cubs. Two boys would rush upon each other, immediately grapple, and—the best boy having probably succeeded in getting the coveted "under hold"—there would presently be a crash to the earth of the inferior boy, and he would probably be mopped around in the dust, or the mud, or the snow, or whatever the material happened to be, until the engagement was over. Whatever havoc was dealt out to him was ordinarily the result of his wild endeavors to throw off his opponent and arise. Both infants wept during the fight, as a common thing, and if they wept very hard, the fight was a harder fight. The result was never very bloody, but the complete dishevelment of both victor and vanquished was extraordinary. As for the spectacle, it more resembled a collision of boys in a fog than it did the manly art of hammering another human being into speechless inability.

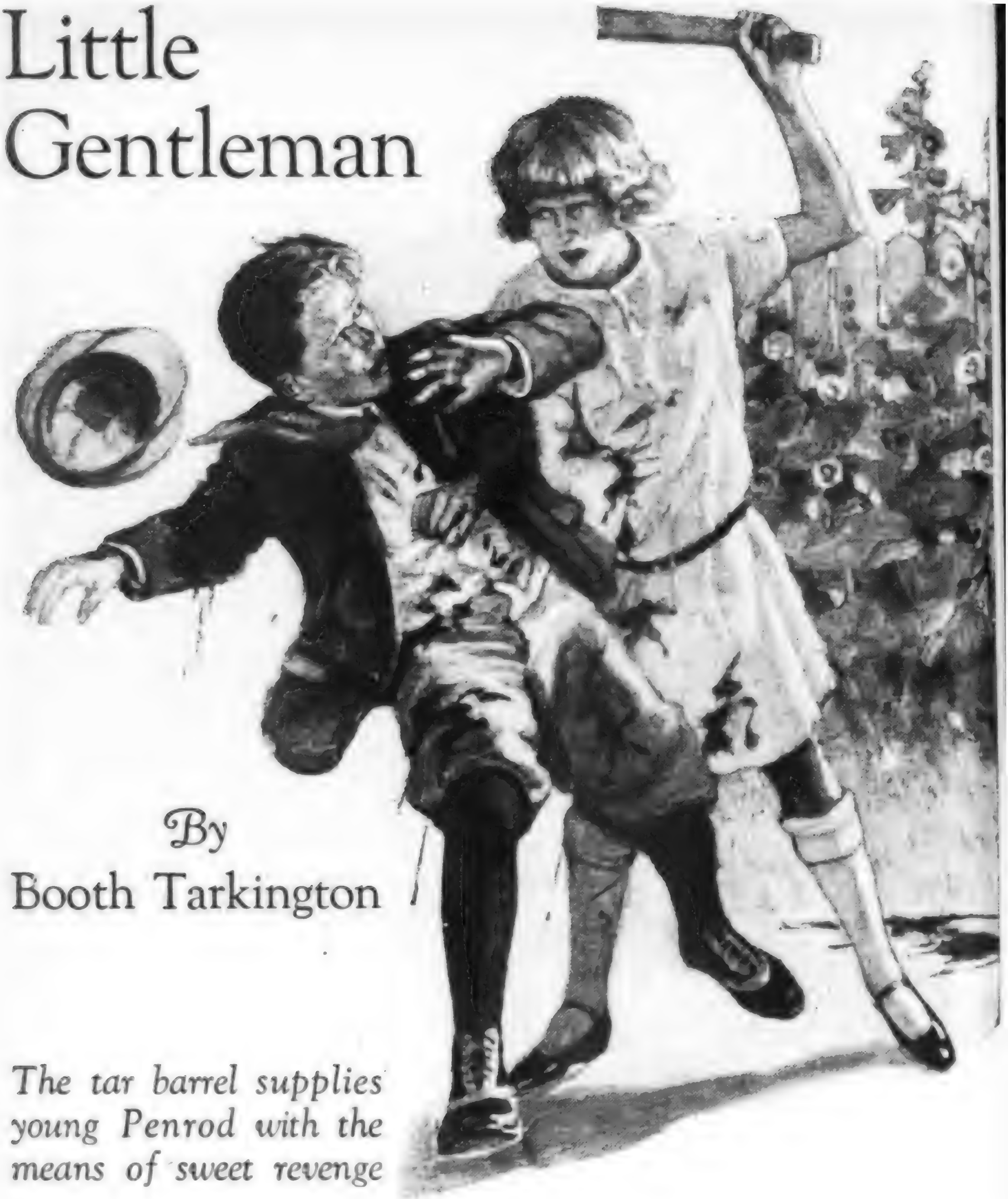
The fight began when Jimmie made a mad, bear-cub rush at the new boy, amid savage cries of encouragement. Willie Dalzel, for instance, almost howled his head off.

Very timid boys on the outskirts of the throng felt their hearts leap to their throats. It was a time when certain natures were impressed that only man is vile.

But it appeared that bear-cub rushing was no part of the instruction received by boys in

[*Continued on page 157*]

Little Gentleman



By Booth Tarkington

The tar barrel supplies young Penrod with the means of sweet revenge

(Reprinted. See announcement on page 102)

THE midsummer sun was stinging hot outside the little barber-shop next to the corner drug-store, and Penrod, undergoing a toilet preliminary to his very slowly approaching twelfth birthday, was adhesive enough to retain upon his face much hair as it fell from the shears. There is a mystery here; the tonsorial processes are not unagreeable to manhood; in truth, they are soothing; but the hairs detached from a boy's head get into his eyes, his ears, his nose, his mouth, and down his neck, and he does everywhere itch excruciatingly. Wherefore he blinks, winks, weeps, twitches, condenses his countenance, and squirms; and perchance the barber's scissors clip more than intended—belike an outlying flange of ear.

"Um—muh—*ow!*" said Penrod, this thing having happened.

"D' I touch y' up a little?" inquired the barber, smiling falsely.

"Ooh—*uh!*" The boy in the chair offered inarticulate protest, as the wound was rubbed with alum.

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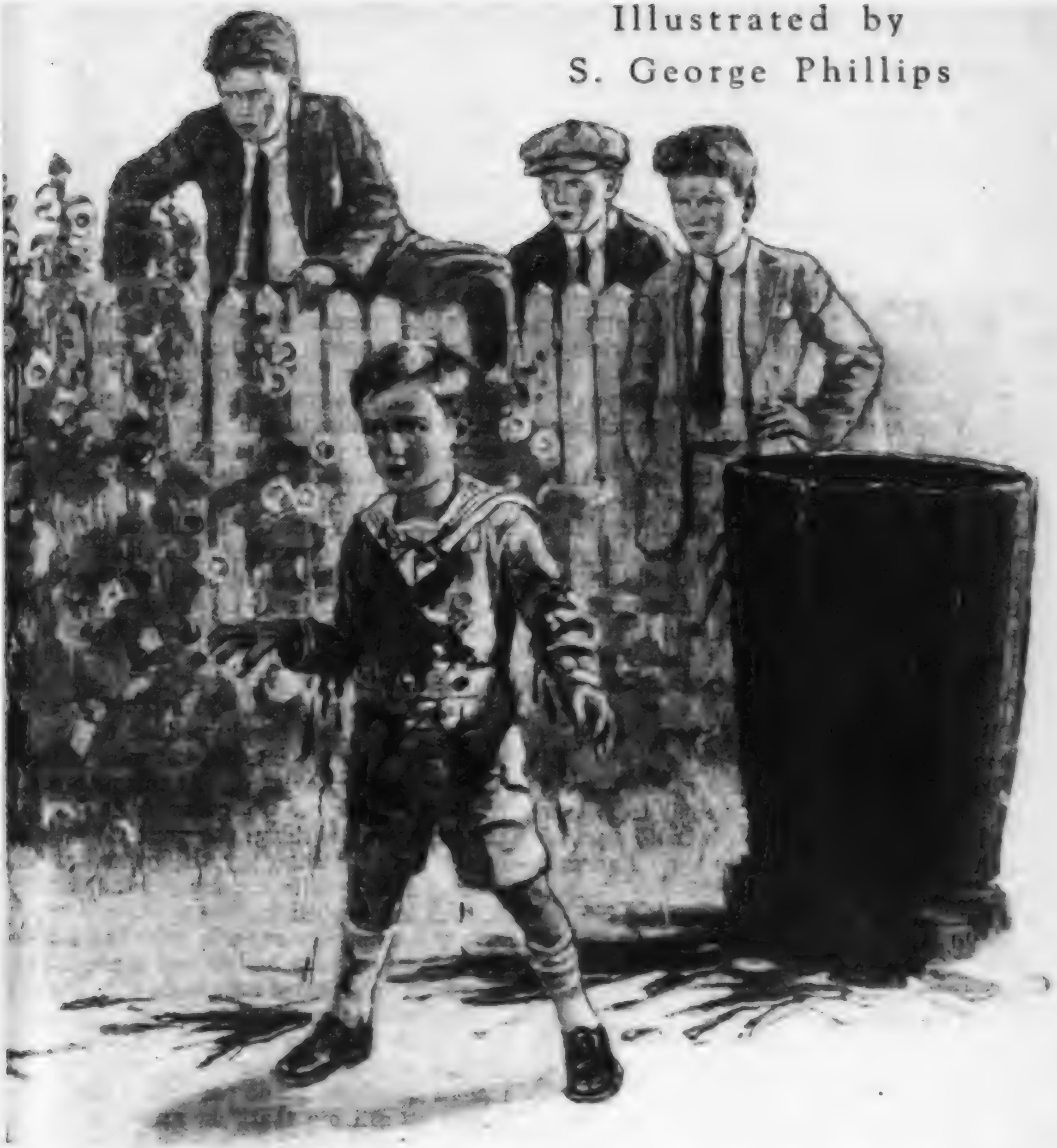
Illustrated by
S. George Phillips



"Little GEN-TIL-MUN!" shrieked Marjorie, with a wild stroke that landed full upon Penrod's tarry cap.

"*That* don't hurt!" said the barber. "You *will* get it, though, if you don't sit stiller," he continued, nipping in the bud any attempt on the part of his patient to think that he already had "it."

"Pluff!" said Penrod, meaning no disrespect, but endeavoring to dislodge a temporary mustache from his lip.

"You ought to see how still that little Georgie Bassett sits," the barber went on, reprovingly. "I hear everybody says he's the best boy in town."

"Pluff! *Phirr!*" There was a touch of intentional contempt in this.

"I haven't heard nobody around the neighborhood makin' no such remarks," added the barber, "about nobody of the name of Penrod Schofield."

"Well," said Penrod, clearing his mouth after a struggle, "who wants 'em to? Ouch!"

"I hear they call Georgie Bassett the 'little gentleman,'" ventured the barber, provocatively, meeting with instant success.

"They better not call *me* that," returned Penrod truculently. "I'd like to hear anybody try. Just once, that's all! I bet they'd never try it ag— *Ouch!*"

"Why? What'd you do to 'em?"

"It's all right what I'd *do!* I bet they wouldn't want to call me that again long as they lived!"

"What'd you do if it was a little girl? You wouldn't hit her, would you?"

"Well, I'd— Ouch!"

"You wouldn't hit a little girl, would you?" the barber persisted, gathering into his powerful fingers a mop of hair from the top of Penrod's head and pulling that suffering head into an unnatural position. "Doesn't the Bible say it ain't never right to hit the weak sex?"

"Ow! *Say*, look *out!*"

"So you'd go and punch a pore, weak, little girl, would you?" said the barber, reprovingly.

"Well, who said I'd hit her?" demanded the chivalrous Penrod. "I'd bet I'd *fix* her, though, all right. She'd see!"

"You wouldn't call her names, would you?"

"No, I wouldn't! What hurt is it to call anybody names?"

"Is that so!" exclaimed the barber. "Then you was intending what I heard you hollering at Fisher's grocery delivery wagon driver fer a favor, the other day when I was goin' by your house, was you? I reckon I better tell him, because he says to me after*werds* if he ever lays eyes on you when you ain't in your own yard, he's goin' to do a whole lot o' things you ain't goin' to like! Yessir, that's what he says to me!"

"He better catch me first, I guess, before he talks so much."

"Well," resumed the barber, "that ain't sayin' what you'd do if a young lady ever walked up and called you a little gentleman. *I* want to hear what you'd do to her. I guess I know, though—come to think of it."

"What?" demanded Penrod.

"You'd sick that pore ole dog of yours on her cat, if she had one, I expect," guessed the barber derisively.

"No, I would not!"

"Well, what *would* you do?"

"I'd do enough. Don't worry about that!"

"Well, suppose it was a boy, then; what'd you do if a boy come up to you and says, 'Hello, little gentleman'?"

"He'd be lucky," said Penrod, with a sinister frown, "if he got home alive."

"Suppose it was a boy twice your size?"

"Just let him try," said Penrod ominously. "You just let him try. He'd never see daylight again; that's all!"

The barber dug ten active fingers into the helpless scalp before him and did his best to displace it, while the anguished Penrod, becoming instantly a seething crucible of emotion, misdirected his natural resentment into maddened brooking upon what he would do to a boy "twice his size" who should dare to call him "little gentleman." The barber shook him as his father had never shaken him; the barber buffeted him, rocked him frantically to and fro; the barber seemed to be trying to wring his neck; and Penrod saw himself in staggering zigzag pictures, destroying large, screaming, fragmentary boys who had insulted him.

The torture stopped suddenly; and clenched, weeping eyes began to see again, while the barber applied cooling lotions which made Penrod smell like a colored housemaid's ideal.

"Now what," asked the barber, combing the reeking locks gently, "what would it make you so mad fer, to have somebody call you a 'little gentleman?' It's a kind of compliment, as it were, you might say. What would you want to hit anybody fer *that* fer?"

To the mind of Penrod this question was without meaning or reasonableness. It was within neither his power nor his desire to analyze the process by which the phrase had become offensive to him, and was now rapidly assuming the proportions of an outrage. He knew only that his gorge rose at the thought of it.

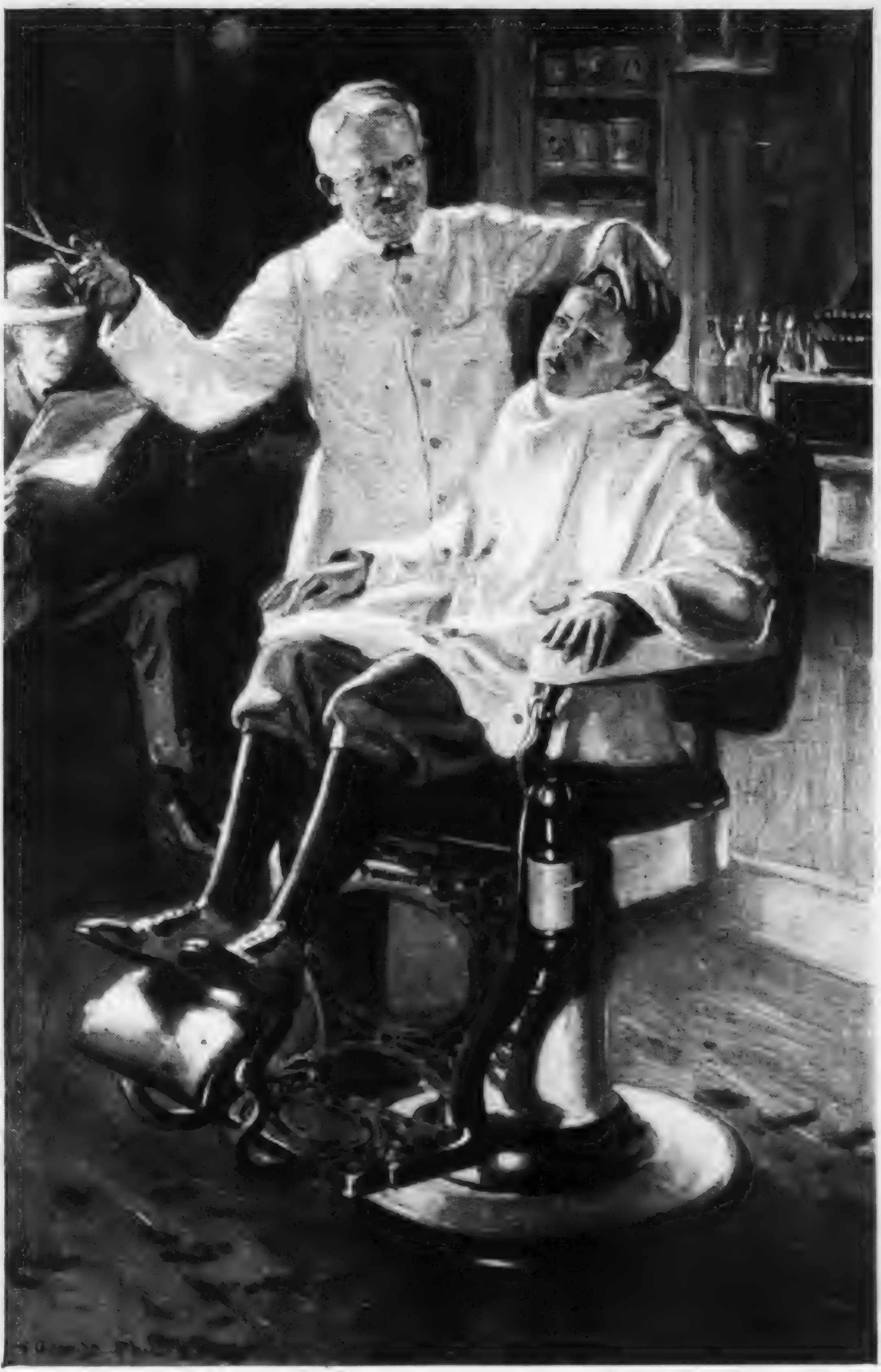
"You just let 'em try it!" he said threateningly, as he slid down from the chair. And as he went out of the door, after further conversation on the same subject, he called back those warning words once more: "Just let 'em try it! Just once—that's all *I* ask 'em to. They'll find out what they *get!*"

The barber chuckled. Then a fly lit on the barber's nose and he slapped at it, and the slap missed the fly but did not miss the nose. The barber was irritated. At this moment his birdlike eye gleamed a gleam as it fell upon customers approaching; the prettiest little girl in the world, leading by the hand her baby brother, Mitchy-Mitch, coming to have Mitchy-Mitch's hair clipped, against the heat.

It was a hot day and idle, with little to feed the mind—and the barber was a mischievous man with an irritated nose. He did his worst.

Meanwhile, the brooding Penrod pursued his homeward way; no great distance, but long enough for several one-sided conflicts with malign insulters made of thin air. "You better *not* call me that!" he muttered. "You just try it, and you'll get what other people got when *they* tried it. You better not ack fresh with *me!* Oh, you *will*, will you?" He delivered a vicious kick full upon the shins of an iron fence-post, which suffered little, though Penrod instantly regretted his indiscretion. "Oof!" he grunted, hopping; and went on after bestowing a look of awful hostility upon the fence-post. "I guess you'll know better next time," he said, in parting, to this antagonist. "You just let me catch you around here again and I'll—" His voice sank to inarticulate but ominous murmurings. He was in a dangerous mood.

Nearing home, however, his belligerent spirit was diverted to happier interests by the discovery that some workmen had left a caldron of tar in the cross-street, close by his father's stable. He tested it, but found it inedible. Also, as a substitute for professional chewing-gum it was unsatisfactory, being insufficiently



"You wouldn't hit a little girl, would you?" the barber persisted, gathering into his powerful fingers a mop of hair from the top of Penrod's head and pulling that suffering head into an unnatural position.

boiled down and too thin, though of a pleasant, lukewarm temperature. But it had an excess of one quality—it was sticky. It was the stickiest tar Penrod had ever used for any purposes whatsoever, and nothing upon which he wiped his hands served to rid them of it; neither his polka-dotted shirt-waist nor his knickerbockers; neither the fence, nor even Duke, who came unthinkingly wagging out to greet him, and retired wiser.

Nevertheless, tar is tar. Much can be done with it, no matter what its condition; so Penrod lingered by the caldron, though from a neighboring yard could be heard the voices of comrades, including that of Sam Williams. On the ground about the caldron were scattered chips and sticks and bits of wood to the number of a great multitude. Penrod mixed quantities of this refuse into the tar, and interested himself in seeing how much of it he could keep moving in slow swirls upon the ebon surface.

Other surprises were arranged for the absent workmen. The caldron was almost full, and the surface of the tar near the rim. Penrod endeavored to ascertain how many pebbles and brickbats, dropped in, would cause an overflow. Laboring heartily to this end, he had almost accomplished it, when he received the suggestion for an experiment on a much larger scale. Embedded at the corner of a grass-plot across the street was a whitewashed stone, the size of a small watermelon and serving no purpose whatever save the questionable one of decoration. It was easily pried up with a stick; though getting it to the caldron tested the full strength of the ardent laborer. Instructed to perform such a task, he would have sincerely maintained its impossibility; but now, as it was unbidden, and promised rather destructive results, he set about it with unconquerable energy, feeling certain that he would be rewarded with a mighty splash. Perspiring, grunting vehemently, his back aching and all muscles strained, he progressed in short stages until the big stone lay at the base of the caldron. He rested a moment, panting, then lifted the stone, and was bending his shoulders for the heave that would lift it over the rim, when a sweet, taunting voice, close behind him, startled him cruelly.

"How do you do, *little gentleman!*"

Penrod squawked, dropped the stone, and shouted, "Shut up, you dern fool!" purely from instinct, even before his about-face made him aware who had so spitefully addressed him.

It was Marjorie Jones. Always dainty, and prettily dressed, she was in speckless and starchy white today, and a refreshing picture she made, with the new-shorn and powerfully scented Mitchy-Mitch clinging to her hand. They had stolen up behind the toiler, and now stood laughing together in sweet merriment. Since the passing of Penrod's Rupe Collins period he had experienced some severe qualms at the recollection of his last meeting with Marjorie and his Apache behavior; in truth, his heart instantly became as wax at sight of her, and he would have offered her fair speech; but, alas! in Marjorie's wonderful eyes there shone a consciousness of new powers for his undoing, and she denied him opportunity.

"Oh, *oh!*" she cried, mocking his pained outcry. "What a way for a *little gentleman* to talk! Little gentlemen don't say wicked—"

"Marjorie!" Penrod, enraged and dismayed, felt himself stung beyond all endurance. Insult from her was bitterer to endure than from any other. "Don't you call me that again!"

"Why not, *little gentleman?*"

He stamped his foot. "You better stop!"

Marjorie sent into his furious face her lovely, spiteful laughter.

"Little gentleman, little gentleman, little gentleman!" she said deliberately. "How's the little gentleman, this afternoon? Hello, little gentleman!"

Penrod, quite beside himself, danced eccentrically. "Dry up!" he howled. "Dry up, dry up, dry up, dry *up!*"

Mitchy-Mitch shouted with delight and applied a finger to the side of the caldron—a finger immediately snatched away and wiped upon a handkerchief by his fastidious sister.

"'Ittle gellamun!" said Mitchy-Mitch.

"You better look out!" Penrod whirled upon this small offender with grim satisfaction. Here was at least something male that could without dishonor be held responsible. "You say that again, and I'll give you the worst—"

"You will *not!*" snapped Marjorie, instantly vitriolic. "He'll say just whatever he wants to, and he'll say it just as *much* as he wants to. Say it again, Mitchy-Mitch!"

"'Ittle gellamun!" said Mitchy-Mitch promptly.

"Ow-*yah!*" Penrod's tone-production was becoming affected by his mental condition. "You say that again, and I'll—"

"Go on, Mitchy-Mitch," cried Marjorie. "He can't do a thing. He don't *dare!* Say it some more, Mitchy-Mitch—say it a whole lot!"

Mitchy-Mitch, his small, fat face shining with confidence in his immunity, complied.

"'Ittle gellamun!" he squeaked malevolently. "'Ittle gellamun! 'Ittle gellamun! 'Ittle gellamun!"

The desperate Penrod bent over the whitewashed rock, lifted it, and then—outdoing Porthos, John Ridd, and Ursus in one miraculous burst of strength—heaved it into the air.

Marjorie screamed.

But it was too late. The big stone descended into the precise midst of the caldron, and Penrod got his mighty splash. It was far, far beyond his expectations.

Spontaneously there were grand and awful effects—volcanic spectacles of nightmare and eruption. A black sheet of eccentric shape rose out of the caldron and descended upon the three children, who had no time to evade it.

After it fell, Mitchy-Mitch, who stood nearest the caldron, was the thickest, though there was enough for all. Bre'r Rabbit would have fled from any of them.

When Marjorie and Mitchy-Mitch got their breath, they used it vocally; and seldom have more penetrating sounds issued from human throats. Coincidentally, Marjorie, quite berserk, laid hands upon the largest stick within reach and fell upon Penrod with blind fury. He had the presence of mind to flee, and they went round and round the caldron, while Mitchy-Mitch feebly endeavored to follow—his appearance, in this pursuit, being pathetically like that of a bug fished out of an ink-well, alive but discouraged.

Attracted by the riot, Samuel Williams made his appearance, vaulting a fence, and was immediately followed by Maurice Levy and Georgie Bassett. They stared incredulously at the extraordinary spectacle before them.

"Little GEN-TIL-MUN!" shrieked Marjorie, with a wild stroke that landed full upon Penrod's tarry cap.

"*Ooochl!*" bleated Penrod.

"It's Penrod!" shouted Sam Williams, recognizing him by the voice. For an instant he had been in some doubt.

"Penrod Schofield!" exclaimed Georgie Bassett. "What does this mean?" That was Georgie's style, and had helped to win him his title.

Marjorie leaned, panting, upon her stick. "I cu-called—uh—him—oh!" she sobbed—"I called him a lul-little—oh—gentleman! And oh—lul-look!—oh! lul-look at my du-dress! Lul-look at Mumitchy—oh—Mitch—oh!"

Unexpectedly, she smote again—with results—and then, seizing the indistinguishable hand of Mitchy-Mitch, she ran, wailing, homeward down the street.

"'Little gentleman?'" said Georgie Bassett, with some evidences of disturbed complacency. "Why, that's what they call *me!*"

"Yes, and you *are* one too!" shouted the maddened Penrod. "But you better not let anybody call *me* that! I've stood enough around here for one day, and you can't run over *me*, Georgie Bassett. Just you put that in you gizzard and smoke it!"

"Anybody has a perfect right," said Georgie with dignity, "to call a person a little gentleman. There's lots of names nobody ought to call, but this one's a nice—"

"You better look out!"

Unavenged bruises were distributed all over Penrod, both upon his body and upon his spirit. Driven by subtle forces, he had dipped his hands in catastrophe and disaster; it was not for a Georgie Bassett to beard him. Penrod was about to run amuck.

"I haven't called you a little gentleman, yet," said Georgie. "I only said it. Anybody's got a right to *say* it."

"Not around *me!* You just try it again and—"

"I shall say it," returned Georgie, "all I please. Anybody in this town has a right to *say* 'little gentleman'—

Bellowing insanely, Penrod plunged his right hand into the caldron, rushed up on Georgie and made awful work of his hair and features.

Alas, it was but the beginning! Sam Williams and Maurice Levy screamed with delight, and, simultaneously infected, danced about the struggling pair, shouting frantically:

"Little gentleman! Little gentleman! Sick him, Georgie! Sick him, little gentleman! Little gentleman! Little gentleman!"

The infuriated outlaw turned upon them with blows and more tar, which gave Georgie Bassett his opportunity and later seriously impaired the purity of his fame. Feeling himself hopelessly tarred, he dipped both hands repeatedly into the caldron and applied his gatherings to Penrod. It was bringing coals to Newcastle, but it helped to assuage the just wrath of Georgie.

The four boys gave a fine imitation of the Laocoön group complicated by an extra figure—frantic splutterings and chokings, strange cries and stranger words issued from this tangle; hands tipped lavishly into the inexhaustible reservoir of tar, with more and more picturesque results. The caldron had been elevated upon bricks and was not perfectly balanced; and under a heavy impact of the struggling group it lurched and went partly over, pouring forth a Stygian tide which formed a deep pool in the gutter.

It was the fate of Master Roderick Bitts, that exclusive and immaculate person, to make his appearance upon the chaotic scene at this juncture. All in the cool of a white "sailor suit," he turned aside from the path of duty—which led straight to the house of a maiden aunt—and paused to hop with joy upon the sidewalk. A repeated epithet continuously half panted, half squawked, somewhere in the nest of gladiators, caught his ear, and he took it up excitedly, not knowing why.

"Little gentleman!" shouted Roderick, jumping up and down in childish glee. "Little gentleman! Little gentleman! Lit—"

A frightful figure tore itself free from the group, encircled this innocent bystander with a black arm, and hurled him headlong. Full length and flat on his face went Roderick into the Stygian pool. The frightful figure was Penrod. Instantly, the pack flung themselves upon him again, and, carrying them with him, he went over upon Roderick, who from that instant was as active a belligerent as any there.

Thus began the Great Tar Fight, the origin of which proved, afterward, so difficult for parents to trace, owing to the opposite accounts of the combatants. Majorie said Penrod began it; Penrod said Mitchy-Mitch began it; Sam Williams said Georgie Bassett began it; Georgie and Maurice Levy said Penrod began it; Roderick Bitts, who had not recognized his first assailant, said Sam Williams began it.

Nobody thought of accusing the barber. But the barber did not begin it; it was the fly on the barber's nose that began it—though, of course, something else began the fly. Somehow we never manage to hang the real offender.

The end came only with the arrival of Penrod's mother, who had been having a painful conversation by telephone with Mrs. Jones, the mother of Marjorie, and came forth to seek an errant son. It is a mystery how she was able to pick out her own, for by the time she got there his voice was too hoarse to be recognizable.

Mr. Schofield's version of things was that Penrod was insane. "He's a stark, raving lunatic!" declared the father, descending to the library from a before-dinner interview with the outlaw, that evening. "I'd send him to a military school, but I don't believe they'd take him. Do you know *why* he says all that awfulness happened?"

"When Margaret and I were trying to scrub him," responded Mrs. Schofield wearily, "he said 'everybody' had been calling him names."

" 'Names!' " snorted her husband. " 'Little gentleman!' *That's* the vile epithet they called him! And because of it he wrecks the peace of six homes!"

"*Sh!* Yes; he told us about it," said Mrs. Schofield, moaning. "He told us several hundred times, I should guess, though I didn't count. He's got it fixed in his head, and we couldn't get it out. All we could do was to put him in the closet. He'd have gone out again after those boys if we hadn't. I don't know *what* to make of him!"

"He's a mystery to *me!*" said her husband. "And he refused to explain why he objects to being called 'little gentleman.' Says he'd do the same thing—and worse—if anybody dared to call him that again. He said if the President of the United States called him that he'd try to whip him. How long did you have him locked up in the closet?"

"*Sh!*" said Mrs. Schofield warningly. "About two hours; but I don't think it softened his spirit at all, because when I took him to the barber's to get his hair clipped again, on account of the tar in it, Sammy Williams and Maurice Levy were there for the same reason, and they just *whispered* 'little gentleman' so low you could hardly hear them—and Penrod began fighting with them right before me, and it was really all the barber and I could do to drag him away from them. The barber was very kind about it, but Penrod—"

"I tell you he's a lunatic!" Mr. Schofield would have said the same thing of a Frenchman infuriated by the epithet "camel." The philosophy of insult needs expounding.

"*Sh!*" said Mrs. Schofield. "It does seem a kind of frenzy."

"Why on earth should any sane person mind being called—"

"*Sh!*" said Mrs. Schofield. "It's beyond *me!*"

"What are you *sh*-ing me for?" demanded Mr. Schofield explosively.

"*Sh!*" said Mrs. Schofield. "It's Mr. Kinosling, the new rector of Saint Joseph's."

"Where?"

"*Sh!* On the front porch with Margaret; he's going to stay for dinner. I do hope—"

"Bachelor, isn't he?"

"Yes."

"*Our* old minister was speaking of him the other day," said Mr. Schofield, "and he didn't seem so terribly impressed."

"*Sh!* Yes; about thirty, and of course *so* superior to most of Margaret's friends—boys home from college. She thinks she likes young Robert Williams, I know—but he laughs so much! Of course there isn't any comparison. Mr. Kinosling talks so intellectually; it's a good thing for Margaret to hear that kind of thing for a change—and, of course, he's very spiritual. He seems very much interested in her." She paused to muse. "I think Margaret likes him; he's so different, too. It's the third time he's dropped in this week, and I—"

"Well," said Mr. Schofield grimly, "if you and Margaret want him to come again, you'd better not let him see Penrod."

"But he's asked to see him, he seems interested in meeting all the family. And Penrod nearly always behaves fairly well at table." She paused, and then put to her husband a question referring to his interview with Penrod upstairs. "Did you—did you—do it?"

"No," he answered gloomily. "No, I didn't, but—" He was interrupted by a violent crash of china and metal in the kitchen, a shriek from Della, and the outrageous voice of Penrod. The well-informed Della, ill-inspired to set up for a wit, had ventured to address the scion of the house roguishly as "little gentleman," and Penrod, by means of the rapid elevation of his right foot, had removed from her supporting hands a laden tray. Both parents started for the kitchen, Mr. Schofield completing his interrupted sentence on the way.

"But I will, now!"

The rite thus promised was hastily but accurately performed in that apartment most distant from the front porch; and twenty minutes later Penrod descended to dinner. The Rev. Mr. Kinosling had asked for the pleasure of meeting him, and it had been decided that the only course possible was to cover up the scandal for the present, and to offer an undisturbed and smiling family surface to the gaze of the visitor.

Scorched but not bowed, the smoldering Penrod was led forward for the social formulæ simultaneously with the somewhat bleak departure of Robert Williams, who took his guitar with him, this time, and went in forlorn unconsciousness of the powerful forces already set in secret motion to be his allies.

The punishment just undergone had but made the haughty and unyielding soul of Penrod more stalwart in revolt; he was unconquered. Every time the one intolerable insult had been offered him his resentment had become the hotter, his vengeance the more instant and furious. And, still burning with outrage, but upheld by the conviction of right, he was determined to continue to the last drop of his blood the defense of his honor, whenever it should be assailed, no matter how mighty or august the powers that attacked it. In all ways he was a very sore boy.

During the brief ceremony of presentation his usually inscrutable countenance wore an expression interpreted by his father as one of insane obstinacy, while Mrs. Schofield found it an incentive to inward prayer. The fine graciousness of Mr. Kinosling, however, was unimpaired by the glare of virulent suspicion given him by this little brother; Mr. Kinosling mistook it for a natural curiosity concerning one who might possibly become, in time, a member of the family. He patted Penrod upon the head, which was, for many reasons, in no condition to be patted with any pleasure to the pattee. Penrod felt himself in the presence of a new enemy.

"How do you do, my little lad," said Mr. Kinosling. "I trust we shall become fast friends."

To the ear of his little lad it seemed he said "A trost we shall bick-home fawst frainds." Mr. Kinosling's pronunciation was, in fact, slightly precious; and the little lad, simply mistaking it for some crypitic form of mockery of himself, assumed a manner and expression which argued so ill for the proposed friendship that Mrs. Schofield hastily interposed the suggestion of dinner, and the small procession went in to the dining-room.

"It has been a delicious day," said Mr. Kinosling presently; "warm but balmy." With a benevolent smile he addressed Penrod, who sat opposite him. "I suppose, little gentleman, you have been indulging in the usual outdoor sports of vacation?"

Penrod laid down his fork and glared, open-mouthed, at Mr. Kinosling.

"You'll have another slice of breast of the chicken?" Mr. Schofield inquired loudly and quickly.

"A lovely day!" exclaimed Margaret, with equal promptitude and emphasis. "Lovely, oh, lovely! Lovely!"

"Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful!" said Mrs. Schofield, and after a glance at Penrod which confirmed her impression that he intended to say something, she continued, "Yes, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful!"

Penrod closed his mouth and sank back in his chair—and his relatives took breath.

Mr. Kinosling looked pleased. This responsive family, with its ready enthusiasm, made the kind of audience he liked. He passed a delicate white hand gracefully over his tall, pale forehead, and smiled indulgently.

"Youth relaxes in summer," he said. "Boyhood is the age of relaxation; one is playful, light, free, unfettered. One runs and leaps and enjoys one's self with one's companions. It is good for the little lads to play with their friends; they jostle, push, and wrestle, and simulate little, happy struggles with one another in harmless conflict. The young muscles are toughening. It is good. Boyish chivalry develops, enlarges, expands. The young learn quickly, intuitively, spontaneously. They perceive the obligations of *noblesse oblige.* They begin to comprehend the necessity of caste and its requirements. They learn what birth means—ah, that is, they learn what it means to be well born. They learn courtesy in their games; they learn politeness, consideration for one another in their pastimes, amusements, lighter occupation. I make it my pleasure to join them often, for I sympathize with them in all their wholesome joys as well as in their little bothers and perplexities. I understand them, you see; and let me tell you it is no easy matter to understand the little lads and lassies." He sent to each listener his beaming glance, and, permitting it to come to rest upon Penrod, inquired:

"And what do you say to that, little gentleman?"

Mr. Schofield uttered a stentorian cough. "More? You'd better have some more chicken! More! Do!"

"Beautiful, beautiful," began Mrs. Schofield. "Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful—"

It is not known in what light Mr. Kinosling viewed the expression of Penrod's face. Perhaps he took it for awe; perhaps he received no impression at all of its extraordinary quality. He was a rather self-engrossed young man, just then engaged in a double occupation, for he not only talked but supplied from his own consciousness of a critical though favorable auditor as well, which of course kept him quite busy. Besides, it is oftener than is suspected the case that extremely peculiar expression upon the countenances of boys are entirely overlooked, and suggest nothing to the minds of people staring straight at them. Certainly Penrod's expression—which, to the perception of his family, was perfectly horrible—caused not the faintest perturbation in the breast of Mr. Kinosling.

Mr. Kinosling waived the chicken, and continued to talk. "Yes, I think I may claim to understand boys," he said, smiling thoughtfully. "One has been a boy one's self. Ah, it is not all playtime! I hope our young scholar here does not overwork himself at his Latin, at his classics, as I did, so that at the age of eight years I was compelled to wear glasses. He must be careful not to strain the little eyes at his scholar's task, not to let the little shoulders grow round over his scholar's desk. Youth is golden; we should keep it golden, bright, glistening. Youth should frolic, should be sprightly; it should play its cricket, its tennis, its hand-ball. It should run and leap; it should laugh, should sing madrigals and glees, carol with the lark, ring out in chanties, folk-songs, ballards, roundelays—"

He talked on. At any instant Mr. Schofield held himself ready to cough vehemently and shout, "More chicken," to drown out Penrod in case the fatal words again fell from those eloquent lips; and Mrs. Schofield and Margaret kept themselves prepared at all times to assist him. So passed a threatening meal, which Mrs. Schofield hurried, by every means within decency, to its conclusion. She felt that somehow they would all be safer out in the dark of the front porch, and led the way thither as soon as possible.

"No cigar, I thank you." Mr. Kinosling, establishing himself in a wicker chair beside Margaret, waved away her father's proffer. "I do not smoke. I have never tasted tobacco in any form." Mrs. Schofield was confirmed in her opinion that this would be an ideal son-in-law. Mr. Schofield was not so sure.

"No," said Mr. Kinosling. "No tobacco for me. No cigar, no pipe, no cigaret, no cheroot. For me, a book—a volume of poems, perhaps. Verses, rhymes, lines metrical and cadenced—those are my dissipation. Tennyson by preference; 'Maud,' or 'Idylls of the King'—poetry of the sound Victorian days; there is none later. Or Longfellow will rest me in a tired hour. Yes; for me, a book, a volume in the hand, held lightly between the fingers."

Mr. Kinosling looked pleasantly at his fingers as he spoke, waving his hand in a curving gesture which brought it into the light of a window faintly illumined from the interior of the house. Then he passed those graceful fingers over his hair, and turned toward Penrod, who was perched upon the railing in a dark corner.

"The evening is touched with a slight coolness," said Mr. Kinosling. "Perhaps I may request the little gentleman—"

"B'gr-r-*ruff!*" coughed Mr. Schofield. "You'd better change your mind about a cigar."

"No, I thank you. I was about to request the lit—"

"*Do* try one," Margaret urged. "I'm sure papa's are nice ones. Do try—"

"No, I thank you. I remarked a slight coolness in the air, and my hat is in the hallway. I was about to request—"

"I'll get it for you," said Penrod suddenly.

"If you will be so good," said Mr. Kinosling. "It is a black bowler hat, little gentleman, and placed upon a table in the hall."

"I know where it is." Penrod entered the door, and a feeling of relief mutually experienced, carried from one to another of his three relatives their interchanged congratulations that he had recovered his sanity.

" 'The day is done, and the darkness,' " began Mr. Kinosling—and recited that poem entire. He followed it with "The Children's Hour," and after a pause at the close, to allow his listeners time for a little reflection upon his rendition, he passed his hand again over his head, and called, in the direction of the doorway:

"I believe I will take my hat now, little gentleman."

"Here it is," said Penrod, unexpectedly climbing over the porch railing, in the other direction. His mother and father and Margaret had supposed him to be standing in the hallway out of deference, and because he thought it tactful not to interrupt the recitations. All of them remembered, later, that this supposed thoughtfulness on his part struck them as unnatural.

"Very good, little gentleman!" said Mr. Kinosling, and being somewhat chilled, placed the hat firmly upon his head, pulling it down as far as it would go. It had a pleasant warmth, which he noticed at once. The next instant he noticed something else, a peculiar sensation of the scalp—a sensation which he was quite unable to define. He lifted his hand to take the hat off, and entered upon a strange experience; his hat seemed to have decided to remain where it was.

"Do you like Tennyson as much as Longfellow, Mr. Kinosling?" inquired Margaret.

"I—ah—I cannot say," he returned absently. "I—ah—each has his own—ugh! flavor and savor, each his—ah—ah—"

Struck by a strangeness in his tone, she peered at him curiously through the dusk. His outlines were indistinct, but she made out that his arms were uplifted in a singular gesture. He seemed to be wrenching at his head.

"Is—is anything the matter?" she asked anxiously. "Mr. Kinosling, are you ill?"

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"Mail Pouch," the College Hobo

ONE evening twenty years ago, an ordinary group of "bums" sat around a hoboes' campfire near a railroad embankment. The day had been scanty in handouts and all of them craved food. One of their number tried to distract his mind from hunger by absently scratching a design with his knife on a flat stone he had found on the track. Becoming absorbed in this diversion he kept on until he had a raised sketch before him. His mates, too, forgot their hunger in watching him work. The next day "Mail Pouch," the hobo who had wielded the knife, sold his maiden effort in a near-by town for the price of breakfast. He has been dining regularly ever since.

His carving has taken on an uncanny skill with the years. He now makes fraternity emblems and college insignia. Or he will carve the full name of the wearer on stones made in the shape of footballs, books, basketballs, baseballs and hearts. Probably there are as many watch-charms bearing his handiwork as any of the leading jewelers can boast. "Mail Pouch's" work is distinctly "collegiate" and therefore always in style.

Long ago he decided the colleges offered the best field for the exercise of his talents.

"This looked to me like a good place to pick 5,000 out of 110,000,000 people who would give me a buck or more apiece for a stone," he explains. His work is so popular that he makes a yearly salary a banker might envy, and with him salesmanship is an art.

"Here y'are buddy," "Mail Pouch" hawks his wares: "Genuine Colorado oil shale, hardest stone in de woild to get (aside, 'I picked dis one up on de beach near Cleveland'), only two dollars. What's dat, buddy? Too much money? Well, now, tell you what I'll do. On account of de heavy dews in Egypt, I'll make it a dollar and a half to you. Sold. Who's next?"

Your first impression upon meeting "Mail Pouch" is that he has an inveterate desire to "kid." After listening to his snappy talk, his bright philosophies of life and his gossip of the colleges you are firmly convinced that here is a comedian diverted only by a trick of fate from a stage career. He has a comprehensive view of current affairs and a unique way of telling the world all about it. You like him from the beginning.

He may come down the brass-bound steps of a Pullman, but if business isn't good, he probably has "ridden the rods" and may creep stealthily out from beneath a fast freight down in the yards.

"Mail Pouch" counts it an assured fact that he will always find some one whom he knows in every town, college or otherwise. A hundred thousand boys from Maine to California greet him by name when he steps onto their respective campuses. The graduates he often meets in their home towns.

"On account of de heavy thaws in Siberia," chants Mail Pouch. "I'll make dis watch fob only a dollar to you. Sold! Who's next?"

His real name is a mystery. The boys of Harvard and Princeton call him Jimmy just to be different. But to most of the schools in the United States he is the hobo "Mail Pouch" whose business it is to visit every college in this country and the important ones in Canada.

His favorite haunts are the fraternity houses. There he is treated like a brother and every house declares a half holiday when he arrives. Once every two years he returns to a given campus and news of his coming spreads as fast as the report of a football victory. He figures that after two years his market is normal again and business generally will be good.

California or the South in the winter time,

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The Flea Barnum of America

THE smallest and most amazing circus on earth is run by one man and all his performers are trained fleas! Fleas dance in gaudy hoopskirts, pull golden chariots two thousand times their own weight, operate a miniature carousel, and jump through hoops at command. This is one of the most serious and truthful declarations the writer has ever made in print or otherwise, yet he could hardly resent your skepticism.

Well do I remember my own scornful outburst when a certain red-headed editor told me about this Flea Circus. The writer was the most genuine sample of a Doubting Thomas you ever saw until he went to Huber's Museum in New York City and witnessed the performance of these acrobatic insects. They actually knew their own names!

John C. Ruhl is the trainer, proprietor and ring-master of this extraordinary circus which has traveled all over the world in a tiny suitcase. In addition Mr. Ruhl acts as mess sergeant for these circus performers. For each flea, when his act is finished, sits down comfortably on the boss's brawny forearm and there feasts in peaceful luxury. John Ruhl allows his fleas to dine off no one but himself.

It is not to be wondered at if they are very much attached to their trainer. As Mr. Ruhl is careful to explain in his program, "there is no danger of desertion."

"Many have fleas," says he, "but few indeed have the patience to train them." He would not be far wrong, indeed, if he were to add that impatience is the outstanding quality manifested by all other people in the world except himself who are possessed of fleas. It is his singular patience, together with a unique knowledge of flea training inherited from a father and grandfather who brought it to a fine art, which leaves Ruhl without fear of competition in an exhibition field that remains in a class by itself.

There is a story behind the exhibition of these trained fleas that goes back to the Russia of 1821. It is responsible for the patience and the skill which a Ruhl of the third generation now exercises in teaching the most bloodthirsty creature in the world how to provide enlightenment and entertainment for its natural prey—Man. An exiled Russian professor, laboring in the lead mines of bleak Siberia for attempting to foment revolution, decided, just as many other prisoners have done in similar situations, that the training of animals was the only thing which would save his sanity. The animals most available at the moment happened to be fleas. In fact, the supply right at hand seemed to be practically limitless. So he set himself the task of training them.

Step up ladies and gents and see a complete circus of genuine Hollywood fleas performing — and later dining—on the forearm of John C. Ruhl.

During the seven years of his exile, whenever he was not chained to a wheelbarrow, he perfected a method for making fleas obey his commands almost as docilely as if they had been trained dogs. Thus out of what had been a scourge the patient professor created a blessing.

When Charles Ruhl, grandfather of the present exhibitor, aided in the professor's escape to Paris, the two men went into partnership for the purpose of training and exhibiting fleas. The novel entertainment they were able to put on became a genuine sensation, and proved a very profitable venture. Charles later taught his son the business, and he, in turn, taught his son John of the third generation. The latter's first exhibition in America was at the St. Louis Exposition of 1904. Shortly afterward John Ruhl moved to California, where he has since

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The Rattlesnake Lady of Minnesota

"AND now who wants to hold a snake?"

"I." "I." "I." The answer comes from half a dozen children at once. "I want Piggie." "I want Stripey." "I want Piggie." Piggie is easily the running favorite—or one might say, the holding favorite.

Piggie, be it known, is not so named from excess of avoirdupois (though a non-starch diet would do him no harm) but because he is a little hog-nose snake, a puff-adder, in other words, one of those harmless little fellows who gives summer tourists something to talk about for a week, by stopping, raising his head, looking them squarely in the eye, and swelling out his throat to prodigious dimensions—nothing, to be sure, but a good piece of American bluff, for Piggie and his kin, being slow on the retreat, wish to put the burden of departure on the other fellow. And it is one that nearly always works. Flipsey and Stripey are garter snakes. As modern speed fiends, they need no puffing apparatus.

"Let me hold the rattlesnake." The words come sedately from a very small girl, with somber eyes from which the clouded sun of Italy looks out. "The snake lady" has heard this plea before. She smiles. It marks the high point in the day's daring. But the answer is always the same. "No. No one can hold the rattlesnakes. They are poisonous, and we never let any one touch them."

Then "the snake lady" opens the glass case, gives Huck, the big diamond-back rattler, a coaxing little rub along his cheeks, and strokes his back till he arches it in pleasure, much as Thomas, the housecat, might arch his. Then she lifts him up in her arms, puts him into a basket, gathers up the harmless snakes, and Piggie and Stripey and Flipsey are soon nestled in the warm hands of the children, or sliding up their coats with inquisitive black tongues darting out to explore as they go.

Grace Olive Wiley is "the snake lady." She is not a "charmer" in a carnival, but a scientist, an entomologist by profession, who took up snakes quite by chance as a sideline, and grew to be pals with them. She is curator of the Minnesota Academy of Natural Sciences and is no doubt the only woman in the world who has rattlesnakes for pets. She likes them. They like her. It may sound unreal, but any one who sees her with them has little doubt that, whatever their reptilian confidence may consist of, she has won it. They slide their heads into her hand, coil themselves into her lap and are content.

Just a deadly diamond back and a playful Gila monster, buddies of Mrs. Grace Wiley, only woman in the world who keeps pet rattlesnakes

The "deadly reptile" of the carnival is as harmless as a kitten, and even in zoos, where poisonous snakes are kept, for the safety of the attendants they are usually defanged. But these snakes that Mrs. Wiley handles have never been operated on. They could at any moment, with a lightning-like dart, leave in her flesh a poison that is almost certain death. It takes a curious sort of courage to handle them as she does, and even men who have gone unflinchingly into No Man's Land, but have no heart for this sort of thing, watch this slight, feminine little woman with a strange light in their eyes. "It isn't courage at all," says Mrs. Wiley. "A snake never strikes unless it is frightened or hurt. And when they are nervous, I never touch them."

Mrs. Wiley was not born a pal to rattlesnakes. Partly she had it thrust upon her, and partly she achieved it. Four or five years ago she went down into Texas to collect bugs for the

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They Live on Chrysanthemums

THE Cheatham family of New Orleans lives on chrysanthemums. The great heavy-petalled flower is literally food, drink, board and lodging to Jim Cheatham and his children, to say nothing of his wife and twenty-two dogs. Clarence, the seventeen-year-old son, is his father's assistant in plowing and in putting up the frames. The two little boys, Roy and Alvin, pull grass from the beds. Mrs. Cheatham helps tie the plants. The police dog puppy guards the plants at night, and baby Elmer, with all the maturity of his twelve months, coos and gurgles among his father's fifty thousand chrysanthemum plants.

"Yes, we all love the chrysanthemums," says Jim Cheatham, as he gazes across his acre of magnificent blooms. "We'd better. They are our life."

Chrysanthemums in New Orleans are holy flowers. They have won a more important place in the scheme of things than holly at Christmas time, or lilies for Easter. On All Saints Day all Louisiana decorates the graves of its dead, and chrysanthemums are the official offering. Every grave, from the yellowing marble tombs of old St. Louis No. II, where the dead have their own streets and their own benches out in front, to the lonely little Cajan graveyards in the parishes, has its bouquet of chrysanthemums. No one is forgotten. Rich and poor, old and young, French and Yankee, Spanish and Creole—all share alike in the great democracy of death. All Saints Day is more than November 1. It is a *fête des morts*. The schools and banks are closed. Automobiles and trolley cars are loaded with chrysanthemums, children go staggering under flowers as big as their heads, chrysanthemums are advertised weeks ahead of time. Florists watch the weather as anxiously as sailors for a storm or a heavy wind.

"It is a year's work for a day's pay," as Jim Cheatham puts it. But it is pretty good pay at that. Mr. Cheatham charges from ten cents to twenty-five cents a piece, wholesale prices on the flowers, and last year he sold fifty thousand chrysanthemums. You can figure it out for yourself.

He didn't start out being a chrysanthemum grower. Eighteen years ago he was a machinist in Birmingham, Alabama. Then he got emery dust in his eyes. The pain was almost unbearable. He had to wear a dark shade, and for two years he feared he was going blind. The doctor demanded that he get an outdoor job. "You'll lose your eyes entirely if you don't," warned the medical man. So Cheatham packed up his wife and baby and came to New Orleans. He did odd jobs on the river. Then he became a street car conductor. It was from a brother motor man that he received the suggestion that was to alter his life.

"We'd better love 'em," chuckles Jim Cheatham, "they're our life." His acre supports 50,000 flowers—and a family. "It's a great country for chrysanthemums and children. They grow well together."

"Come around and see my little garden, Jim," said the friendly motor man, "I've got some likely chrysanthemums, and I'll give you some cuttings." Jim Cheatham accepted both the invitation and the plants.

"Chrysanthemums down here are wonderful flowers," he told his wife that evening. "Not like the measly things we have at home. Why—that fellow's got a flower that measures six inches across its face. In one part of the city I saw four thousand of them in bloom. It looked like Paradise. Some day I'm going to raise a whole city block of chrysanthemums."

His wife laughed, and so did he. But the

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Everybody's Chestnut Tree

***Editor's Note:** Though the sign is the Chestnut Tree, no story is barred by its youth. We will gladly pay for available ones. Address all manuscripts to "The Chestnut Tree," enclosing stamped, addressed envelope.*

Unmistaken Identity

President Coolidge, Henry Ford and Harvey Firestone were standing on the sidewalk in Washington discussing some topic of interest when their attention was attracted to a young man parking a Ford car equipped with Firestone tires at the curb near where they were standing. Stepping up to the young man Mr. Firestone asked him:

"How do you like Firestone tires?"

The young man answered in the affirmative and Mr. Firestone remarked, "Well, I think they are pretty good too, because you see I am the man who makes them."

Mr. Ford asked a few questions about the car itself and when the young man assured him that to date he had had no difficulty, Mr. Ford remarked:

"It is a very good car and you will like it because I know, I am the man who made it."

This was too much for the owner of the Ford. "Say," he burst out, "what you guys tryin' to hand me? First thing I know that little shrimp wid youse'll be tellin' me he's President of the United States."

Welcome Death

"Throw up your hands, I'm going to shoot you."

"What for?"

"I always said if I ever met a man homelier than I, I'd kill him."

"Am I homelier than you?"

"You certainly are."

"Well then, go ahead and shoot."

Sole Leather

If you remember how the hot pavements used to scorch your tender feet, try this on your phonograph.

In a primitive cabin in the Ozarks a family of "hillbillies" was gathered about a roaring wood fire. The father and mother wore heavy, ill-shaped shoes but to their numerous progeny foot covering was an unknown luxury.

A blazing ember popped out of the fire onto the floor and a peculiar odor became noticeable. The father sniffed the air, glanced around, then shouted excitedly to an eighteen-year old daughter, "Sal, you're standin' on a live coal."

"That so?" drawled the girl lazily. "Which foot, paw?"

Reverse Publicity

Amos Skinner, the leading deacon of his church, was chuckling in high glee when he ran into another deacon on the village green.

"Got it at last, by heck," he cackled to his friend.

"What you cal'late you got, Amos?" asked the other.

"Just a little dee-vice, Ezry, but it's a-going to make me rich. Every meetin' house in the hull caounty'll want one."

"Haow you figger that out, Amos?" persisted Ezra.

"Well, it's a patent contribution box. Coins fall through slots of different sizes. Dollars, half-dollars and quarters fall on velvet; nickels and pennies drop on a Chinese bell!"

Some Baby

A young business man who was deacon in his home church and was going to New York on business was asked to purchase a new sign for the front of the church. He copied the motto and dimensions of the sign, but when he reached New York the paper was nowhere to be found. Deciding that he must have left the paper in a coat at home he wired his wife. "Send motto and dimensions." An hour later a message came over the wire and the young lady clerk who had just come from lunch and knew nothing of the previous wire fainted. When they looked at the message she had just taken they read: Unto us a child is born six feet long and two feet wide.

The Truth, the Whole Truth—

A movie actor was suing a company for an immense sum for breach of contract. Upon being asked why he demanded such a sum, he replied:

"Because I am the greatest actor in the world."

Later one of his friends took him to task for so loudly singing his own praises.

"I know, it must have sounded somewhat conceited," he admitted, "but I was under oath, so what could I do?"

Compulsory Refinement

The train had halted at a station surrounded by virgin forest in one of the few localities in the South where life is still primitive and the natives cling to the customs of their fathers. A passenger noticed a party of men on horseback who, from their general appearance, looked very much like a sheriff's posse.

"Who are they after?" he asked a man who was lounging on the platform.

"Well, stranger," drawled the native, "you see Ike Jones' eldest boy, p'tu, is fo'teen today, an' they aim to run him down an' put shoes on him."

Practically Arrived

Hiram had walked four miles over the Great Smokies to call on his lady fair. For a time they sat silent on a bench by the side of her log cabin, but soon the moon, as moons do, had its effect and Hiram slid closer to her and patted her hand.

"Mary," he began, "y'know I got a clearin' over thar and a team an' wagon an' some hawgs an' cows, an' I 'low to build me a house this fall an'—"

Here he was interrupted by Mary's mother who had awakened.

"Mary," she called in a loud voice, "is that young man thar yit?"

Back came the answer: "No maw, but he's gittin' thar."

"—— and Bath"

The wealthy tourist from Chicago found himself stranded in a small backwoods town in northern Minnesota on his tour and was forced to stop overnight at the local hotel until he could get more money in the morning by return wire.

Upon arising he sought some way to take a bath, there being no bath in connection with his room.

As soon as he explained what he wanted the clerk promptly yelled toward the kitchen, "Hey, Olaf, here's a gent wants to take a bath. Bring the fixin's out, will ya?"

A tall, yellow-headed Nordic promptly appeared with a bar of octagon soap and a pickax slung over his shoulder.

"What's that pick for?" asked the guest in astonishment.

"Yu skoll tank yu want bath," explained the Swede patiently. "Vell, yust take das pick and dam oop crick."

"The System" Exposed Again

A shrewd son of Italy desiring to open a hot-dog and soft-drink stand at the corner of Broad and Wall Streets applied to the superintendent of J. P. Morgan & Co.'s building. After some hesitation he was given permission to set up a small stand.

Business prospered at a furious rate and Brother Tony and Cousin Giuseppe were called in to help out during the rush hours at noon time. Another cousin, Pietro, happened along one day.

"Hey, Joe, howsa biz?" he inquired.

"She's go pretty good," admitted the lucky proprietor, hoping for another assistant. "If I getta tree week more lika dis, I'll be sittin' ona worl'."

"Datsa fine," grinned the cousin. "How about you lend-a me ten dollar till-a Monday?"

A spasm of pain crossed the merchant's shining brow. "I'm so sorry, Pietro," he sighed, patting the other's shoulder. "It's lika dis. W'an I come here Meestah Morgan, he make-a bargain weeth me. He say, 'Joe, I promise not to go ina hot-dog business, but you mus' promise not to loan no money.' "

She Didn't Order Chicken Salad

" 'Scuse me, Miss young lady, but ain't yo' name Miss Magnolia Johnson?"

"Yas, suh, mah name Miss Magnolia Johnson."

"Well, Miss Magnolia, is yo' program fill' yet?"

"No, suh, mah program ain't fill'. No, suh, Gawd knows mah program ain' fill'. No suh, 'cause all I bin had to eat dis evenin' was one slice o' watuh millyun."

A Native of the Neck

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had a motor," continued Mrs. Gaddis. "The wheels you could use on a cart for carryin' wood up from the beach. An' there's enough tin to keep all the rats in creation out o' yer cellar an' corncrib. Ain't a thing on that little car you couldn't turn to account, if you'd a mind to. B'lieve me, Cy Cleb, I'd show Wilbur Washburn he wasn't so smart after all!"

Cy stared thoughtfully at his plate; then his gaze wandered out the window toward the harbor, now a dirty blue with the threatening storm.

"It sounds interestin' an' suggestive," he said at last. "Mebbe I'll do somethin' o' the sort."

But during the rest of the meal Cy's mind was not on the car. From time to time he stole a glance at the widow's pink and white face or at her well-rounded forearms; and he wondered why he had been blind to her charms for so many years. He glanced about the neat room, and its appearance revealed in the owner charms of far greater value than pink cheeks and well-rounded forearms; it bespoke frugality and thrift in every piece of furniture—in the mended cane-seat chairs, in the rag rugs on the floor, in the patched but attractive curtains at the windows. There was nothing extravagant about the Widow Gaddis!

Cy looked up and met the widow's dark eyes. He had meant to glance quickly away, but something in them held him. They were no longer mocking, but gentle, almost compassionate. He smiled, and then they both looked out the window.

"We're going to get it hard, Mary," remarked the sister. "See how dark it is. Will it hurt your car to get it wet?" she said to Cy.

"Nope. Might help it—needs washin', I guess." Cy grinned: He had no notion of departing just yet.

There was a flash of lightning followed closely by a clap of thunder. Mrs. Trumbull rose hastily and glanced toward the stairway.

"Here comes the rain," said the widow. "Cy, you might just as well make yerself comf'table. You can't go till it's over."

A rush of rain against the window panes, a vivid flash, and Mrs. Trumbull strode toward the stairway. "I'm going upstairs, Mary," she said.

"She's terribly frightened at thunderstorms—always was," the widow explained to Cy. "She'll get in bed an' stay there till it's over."

"Huh," said Cy.

The rain increased to a steady downpour. The trees along the road bent and swayed before the lashing of the wind. Beyond them lay the harbor, hidden now by the rain. Cy and his hostess sat in silence beside the window.

At last the widow sighed, then sighed again.

He glanced at her, but her face was in shadow. "What's the matter, Mis' Gaddis?" he ventured to ask.

"I was thinkin' of the Eaton girl," the widow replied. "They say she's frightened of thunder, too. It's—it's a sort of a pity you ain't with her, Cy."

Cy regarded her quickly. Her words seemed to suggest laughter, but if she was laughing, the darkness prevented him from being sure. "I don't want to be with her," he said bluntly.

"I thought maybe you did, Cy."

"Well, I don't. I want to be right here where I am—with you."

A long silence followed the remark. The lightning played over the hills, and the thunder crashed with heavy emphasis. But Cy scarcely saw or heard. Something strange seemed to be happening within him—something that made him want to speak and yet kept him silent. He clasped and unclasped his hands; he shifted his legs awkwardly.

"Shall I light the lamp?" inquired the widow doubtfully.

"Guess we don't need it. Storm won't last long."

Again the widow sighed; then she began to hum softly to herself.

Cy leaned abruptly forward. "Mis' Gaddis—"

"Yes, Cy." The voice was like a caress.

Cy cleared his throat. "I guess mebbe I'm a fool, but I'm all alone, ye might say, and you—you're all alone, too. It don't seem right fer two people who grew up together. I—I—"

He paused, gulped, then said hoarsely, "I want you to marry me."

Mary Gaddis made no answer, but a bright flash of lightning revealed her face, and at sight of it Cy suddenly reached forth and caught her hands in both of his.

"Cy, take care!" she remonstrated, attempting to draw back. "If Ella Eaton should hear of this—"

"Ella Eaton be—" Cy checked himself, then drew her toward him in a strong embrace, and as it happened, there was no more lightning for fully five minutes.

It may be that Mrs. Trumbull had fallen asleep in her fright; it may be that she was very much awake; at any rate she was still upstairs when the rain ceased and Cy, considerably less ill at ease in the presence of the widow, kissed her good night and splashed across the road to his car. It had been a day of miracles to Cy, not the least of which was the one that happened when he climbed into the driver's seat. He started the car at the second attempt.

It was almost ten o'clock when he parked the car on the grease spot and then made his way to the darkened house, the happiest young man on the Neck.

ON WEDNESDAY morning following the election Mr. Cleb and Mr. Washburn were seated as usual beneath the apple tree. Sounds from within the erstwhile carpenter shop indicated that Cy was at work there. The grease spot on the field was somewhat faded. The car that had made it was not in sight; as a car it no longer existed, for Cy had followed the widow's advice.

"Wal," said Mr. Washburn, opening the conversation, "had a notion all along we might win, an' we did, even, even though the old Bay State backslid tother way."

"Yep, we won," Mr. Cleb's voice held satisfaction, but scarcely the gusto that his old friend had expected from him.

Mr. Washburn regarded him shrewdly. "Rheumatiz a-botherin' ye again, David?"

"No, oh, no; never felt better." Mr. Cleb suddenly laughed. "Cy give me somethin' to study on first thing this mornin'—somethin' that touches me a mite closer even than a Pres'dential 'lection."

"Huh," observed Mr. Washburn. "That Prov'dence gal, is it?"

"No, 'tain't her. You know, Henry, I said I thought Cy was clear-headed enough to keep unentangled in the d'rection. It's somebody better suited than her. He an' Mrs. Gaddis has agreed to git married come spring."

Mr. Cleb enjoyed the surprise depicted in his friend's face.

"The Widow Gaddis!" repeated Mr. Washburn. "Well, now that's interestin' news, David, an' I must say it seems a altogether suitable match. I don't know why sech an idea never once occurred to me; she's been a widow these twelve years. Only f'm what Wilbur told me a space back, I had a sort o' notion your boy an' the Eaton gal might hook up."

Uncle Davy chuckled. "And from what Cy's told me, I had a sort o' notion she and your boy might hook up."

It was Mr. Washburn's turn to chuckle. "Wilbur's too smart fer that even if I, as shouldn't, says it. He was a bit carried away at fust, I'll admit, but he was smart enough to see the light. A boy who could sell your boy a wuthless car fer twenty-two dollars *has got* to be smart, David."

Mr. Cleb nodded. "That's logic, Henry, that's logic."

"I hope ye're pleased, David."

"I am pleased, Henry; that's why this here 'lection don't seem to me so important as some I've known. Yet," he added thoughtfully, "I s'pect the 'lection goin' the right way is what made 'em decide not to wait longer'n spring."

There was a pause during which the stillness of the air was broken only by the sounds of Cy's hammer.

"What's he makin' it over into now since he tore up his car?" inquired Mr. Washburn.

A grin of pleasure wrinkled Mr. Cleb's face. "It's goin' to be a pantry agin. She said she wanted it so."

All of which is further proof that nothing goes to waste on the Neck—not even widows.

When the President Is Neighbor Coolidge

[*Continued from page 16*]

solicitor. The exchange had been entirely friendly, and it had taught Mr. Coolidge one of the things he wanted to know—how some people feel about politics. It was an honest difference of opinion, based on logic. Such things exist—why not become acquainted with them?

The truth of the matter is this man has spent most of his life studying the minds of his neighbors. That is how Coolidge learned his business from the bottom up. Now he knows the mental processes of a nation of neighbors because in his youth he learned the minds of over twenty thousand Northampton neighbors.

My work as a writer on business methods has brought me into contact with several hundred heads of businesses, many of whom are national figures. One is struck over and over again with the similarity between the head of a business corporation and this head of a vast political corporation, Calvin Coolidge of Massasoit Street. In his profession of politics Coolidge has adopted the same sure-fire methods that most of the corporation presidents I know have adopted in their business careers.

Theoretically every male infant born in the United States is a future president. Theoretically every male infant could likewise be president of the steel trust. Practically, however, the adult man needs considerable preparation in one line or the other before he can hope to be president either of a corporation or of the United States.

Of course, preparation, even plus ability and genius, does not make certain a rise to the summit. No insurance company would ever issue a policy on a man rising eventually to the top, either in business or in government, no matter how right his methods might be. But Coolidge, the mysterious, quiet, fundamental and capable, is an example of what a little supplement of luck can do at any moment to a man who is distinctly lined up for promotion.

To be sure, no one has been able to tell whether lawyer Coolidge's selection of a lady to accompany him on his way to the White House was more luck or wisdom. Certainly it was a great deal of one or the other—or both, for she supplemented perfectly her husband's personal qualities. But I will try to give a neighbor's motion picture portrait of Mrs. Coolidge later.

Lawyer Hammond, in whose office Coolidge studied law immediately after graduation from college, said, "It would be foolish for us to say that we looked at that boy and unanimously exclaimed, 'There goes the future president of the United States.' But we did notice certain things. Anything he did at all, he did well.

"He subordinated a keen sense of humor, which might conceivably have made him merely an office jokester, to a serious estimate of the extremes of any proposition. Afterward he formed the habit of seeing the extremes on the one side and on the other, and taking the constructive middle course.

"He always had a power of saying what he meant in a simple, short way, so plain that nobody could possibly misunderstand what he meant. Nobody could possibly take exception in any way to anything he put down on paper, I could never make a correction as to clearness or accuracy or even mere diction."

Here was the seed of his terse telegram twenty years later in rebuke of the Boston police strike. Clear and simple, it made him known throughout the country: 'There is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, any time.'" There is an echo of some of Lincoln's clear-cut sentences in this.

"He always had a power of quick decision," Lawyer Hammond continued. "He made up his mind very quickly what he wanted to do. Then he usually did it."

When Calvin Coolidge, two years a lawyer, decided in 1899 to run for councilman, he did not restrict himself to superficial methods. Perhaps a survey of the current politicians did not encourage imitation of the methods lying behind their results. At any rate, he had to learn the business of politics all over again, as if it had never been learned before.

There were only, let us say, five hundred and fifty-two voters in the ward. I don't know the exact number, but you can bet Coolidge knew. That meant perhaps five hundred houses to call at. You can picture him going steadily through this list and appearing in one house after the other, just as he had in ours.

Mr. Coolidge is thorough. The result of his thoroughness appeared after that election day. He got into the headlines beside the mayor and other exalted personages, because of his surprising majority.

Had he stopped when he had secured promises of the three hundred votes sufficient to win? Not at all. He went right on. Democrats too? Certainly.

If they are citizens and if they know you for a good citizen, they may vote as citizens, not strictly as Democrats. Ever since that first election Coolidge's vote in his home city was so large that it could not possibly have come from Republicans only.

This brings us down to 1904 when Coolidge was given the job of county clerk to fill out a term, and was then offered the nomination by the Republicans for the next year. It was equivalent to election, for though our city itself is nearly evenly divided, the farming towns in the rings of hills surrounding our city make our county as surely Republican as any county in Texas is surely Democratic. It didn't take the young Clerk of the Courts long to make up his mind. Custom would have kept the incumbent in for life, with a bigger salary than he was then able to earn as a lawyer, but he refused. It was a life job, but it was a blind alley. Had he taken it, he might well be there yet—County Clerk Coolidge instead of President Coolidge!

INSTEAD he gave free service as chairman of the local Republican city committee. This taught him the partisan mechanisms which he needed to know in an American political system based on two parties one or the other of which is the only road up. As chairman he was in a legitimate position to hear both sides and it was likewise his business to know all the personalities with whom he had to deal—and keep that knowledge under his hat. He learned the political layout and personnel of our seven wards, the location of strategic votes, how to reach the French vote in Ward Seven, how to make his way among the disaffections in Ward One. Now when Western senators, farm blocs, wets and drys pull at cross purposes, don't wonder that Coolidge keeps to his path more or less serenely.

Having acquired local political knowledge, he used it quite legitimately for his own benefit. In 1907 he was elected a member of the general court as it is called here in Massachusetts—in other words our State representative at Beacon Hill. Like any business man, he had two simultaneous purposes, the purpose to serve the public in some needed worthwhile way, and the personal purpose to go higher in his chosen career.

When he had been in the Massachusetts lower house for two years our citizens went looking for a mayor to be chosen from among themselves. Just as later, the nation went looking for a vice-president and president to be chosen from any town and any street.

Let us line up the breadwinners of any street in Northampton. Take Massasoit Street branching from Elm Street, our residences centerline, where old elms in almost continuous arches shade long concrete walks and green lawns. Let us picture this actual present day street beneath the trees and ask each dweller to stand on the sidewalk before his house. Nearest the corner stands a retired engraver, skilful in his day. Next, before a green shingled cottage with screened porches, a slender, white mustached bookkeeper. Then a merchant tailor. A hardware retailer, formerly postmaster, plump and smiling. A Methodist minister whose parsonage is a mile from his church. A grocer. Our capable young city clerk. Then a double house and before one of its sidewalks the high school principal. Before the other half Lawyer Calvin Coolidge. Next a retired business man. And so on. Which of these men would inevitably be selected for mayor? These and other neighbors are to do the selecting. To continue our picture down the same street and the next adjoining one, a hosiery mill knitter. A manufacturer. A street railway superintendent. A blue-capped street car conductor. A railway mail clerk. A department store salesman. A cutlery grinder. A tooth brush factory workman. A steam-fitter. A writer. A locomotive engineer. A window decorator. A farm hand. A contractor,—Coolidge's neighbors. All America stands here on the street. Modern America.

About one-third of the modern town is still of the old "Yankee" or "Puritan" descent, another third are of Irish blood, while most of our other neighbors are French Canadian, already in the second or third generation and Polish in the first or second. All good citizens. Here is a healthy, attractive, self-contained town, with industries on the outskirts, known the world over, yielding good products and high wages. Out beyond them are farms. Where could you get a more complete cross-section of the northeastern United States?

A TOLERANT town. The majority of the voters are Republicans, but when the town picked out a city charter, the first mayor was a Democrat. Since then about half of the mayors have been Democrats.

Democratic Mayor Fitzgerald was in office on the day that former Mayor Coolidge became the nation's President. Mayor and President both received majorities from their neighbors at the next election, according to the town's custom of returning those who had looked well after the public's interests.

All of which shows that Calvin Coolidge, lawyer, could not have been elected mayor if he had not been capable of filling the place.

The people of Northampton saw nothing unusual in Coolidge's twenty-eight dollars rent for half of a double house, until, long afterward, the country's newspapers treated it as news. Coolidge's family consisted only of a wife and two sons; it would have been unnecessary and foolish for him to get a larger place, even while he was Governor of the proud but simple State of Massachusetts. His home was simple, but it was just like millions of other American homes from which a president might come. Now passing automobilists can tell which half of the double house was Coolidge's by the flag-pole which the city had erected on the little square of lawn. A boy scout takes down the flag at sunset.

During his two terms as mayor, Calvin Coolidge made few sensations, but our city's debt went down very considerably. And he issued no bonds though he raised the salaries of school teachers and increased the force of policemen and firemen. He might have been our mayor again but he went to Boston as our State senator, an office which he held for four terms. As a matter of fact Coolidge's upward progress was uninterrupted for eighteen years from 1907 to 1925 and as you can see it had been preceded by ten or twelve years of preparation before that.

The next typical incident of Mr. Coolidge's harvesting methods is said to have happened in Boston. I can't swear to the truth of it, but it is a legend, and it is exactly like him. It was the morning after the previous president of the Senate had been refused renomination because of his opposition to woman suffrage. This left the forty senators to elect a new president from their number. Mr. Coolidge was at that time a State senator in his third term, quite unnoticed. He came from a district in the western part of the State, including no populous city. He had no celebrated cause or slogan.

All the newspapers and political sharps had narrowed the printed discussion down to five men, every one of them from the eastern part of the State.

In a hotel lobby just before the session was to open, Mr. Coolidge was one of a row of other chair-occupants all reading the conjectures in the newspapers, when a reporter sat down beside him. This reporter had formed a liking for the taciturn senator, for whenever he could get him to indicate anything it always turned out to be accurately true. And in spite of the fact that this senator never asked questions, nothing that happened seemed to surprise him—he always seemed miraculously acquainted with whatever was going on, or was going to go on. On first forming his estimate of Coolidge, the reporter had decided that if he ever did get a story out of him, it would be a whale of a story. But he had long ago given up hope.

"Well, who's going to be the next president of the senate, Mr. Coolidge?" asked the reporter with cheerful perfunctoriness as he slipped into the next chair in the row.

"I am," said Mr. Coolidge. He did not look up from the published pictures of the five possible lucky men.

"Oh, come," said the reporter, and rose to depart. "Quit your kidding. You might at least venture an opinion."

Mr. Coolidge simply continued to read the prophecies. After a moment the reporter's subconscious news sense managed to beat into his brain the startling fact that Mr. Coolidge had, at last, after all these months made a direct statement. "What's that you said?" he asked sharply. "Did I hear you say you were going to be president of the Senate?"

Mr. Coolidge's hand left one edge of the newspaper with the five men's pictures long enough to reach into his breast pocket. He brought out a paper, which he passed to the reporter, while he himself resumed his reading with real interest.

THE document was practically a subscription list saying, "My choice for president of the Senate is Calvin Coolidge," signed by twenty-two of the forty senators.

"Wooch!" shouted the reporter. This was a clear majority of the Senate, and much more than a majority of the Republican caucus of thirty-five which would really name the successful candidate. The signers were all Republicans.

How had he done it? Oh, he had had nothing special to do during the vacation; and he had a notion he would like to be the Senate's presiding officer. So he just spent a few days visiting the senators, not in the bustle and conflict of Boston, but at their various homes in various parts of the state. Senators at home doubtless feel much human and friendly, as though they had a right to do things without consulting anybody else. It was the mayoralty contest over again. Mr. Coolidge hadn't scurried madly about. No one has to hurry who uses his brain going to the right spot at the right time, and finishes each piece of business in three words.

This election to the presidency of the Senate was necessary as the first rung of the higher Republican promotion ladder. From that rung, he went in due time to lieutenant governor, and thence again in due time to governor. While Coolidge stayed lieutenant governor for three years, nevertheless his business, that is to say, his votes increased every year. They were as follows: 1915—52,194; 1916—84,930; 1917—101,731.

He is credited—like all good politicians—with a marvelous accuracy in forecasting how many votes he will receive. The impression in Massachusetts is, that if he allows his name to be used for an office, he knows in advance he will win. When the other contenders hear he is going to accept a nomination a chill strikes them. He has been in public office almost continuously ever since he started as ward councilman, except for three months between the expiration of his term as governor and the beginning of his national term, as vice-president. Certainly he is a practical politician.

And that brings us to the question: What service does a politician render?

When you approach Mr. Coolidge about anything, he will immediately ask you one question. It is not a curt "What do you want?" but "What do you want me to do?"

"Hah! Three superfluous words!" says some Sherlock Holmes of efficiency. "You have shattered the myth of Coolidge taciturnity." So? Personal service is tentatively offered in the extra three words, and at the same time they pin the other party down to telling the essential affair. After that opening, Mr. Coolidge concludes the business with marvelous speed. He gets speed by a peculiar method—by not talking. He listens. If he puts in one question, it lances straight to the one central point of the whole situation. Or it tests whether your personal bias affects the accuracy of your estimates.

At the end you will get one of Mr. Coolidge's three answers:

1. "I can't do what you want."

Reasons may not be expressed.

2. "I will look into it, and let you know whether I can help you."

3. "I will try to get what you want."

The interview is over. The change in atmosphere is such that you part company with Mr. Coolidge. But if you carry away with you answer No. 2 or No. 3, you may feel that in departing you are getting out of your own way so that Mr. Coolidge can telephone or dictate a letter to start your affair rolling.

And that is probably just what he is doing. Before he forgets it, he generally takes action with all completeness possible at the time.

His three answers mean either what they say, or much more. When he says merely, "I will let you know whether I can help you," you may next hear from him in a note, "I believe the matter will be arranged to your satisfaction if you will come to my office at 2 P.M. on June 5th."

If you can even get from him the decision to "try to secure what you want," you go about your other affairs and forget this one, on the theory that it is now his affair and if he wants your aid he will tell you so. So you may get a three-line note from his secretary saying, "Mr. Coolidge is happy to announce that what you wanted is done."

Is answer No. 1—a refusal—ever given? Yes.

It makes no difference to Coolidge how well organized or clamorous is the force taking the side inimical to the welfare of the majority. Though all the Massachusetts farmers organized through our state grange threatened never to vote for any one who went against them on daylight saving, and had pushed through the legislature a repeal of daylight saving, Governor Coolidge, born on a farm, did not hesitate to veto the repeal.

He discharged the whole Boston police force for attempting to strike, although many of the labor unions they had affiliated with were sure to be against him.

To put through his measures as our governor he was dependent upon the legislators, of whom he had been one; yet when those legislators voted themselves a salary raise, he did not hesitate to veto it. Governor Coolidge told them that when they went out for election they knew what the salary was, and that they were probably getting enough anyway. Their membership in the great and general court of the state was not a job but a civic function, out of which nobody was supposed to make a fortune, just meet expenses.

"If value for services were the criterion," he remarked drily, "there would be two hundred and eighty different salaries." The mind picture of two hundred and eighty legislators debating their two hundred and eighty different values as a basis of pay was evidently the final straw. No more was said about a pay increase.

Critics of Coolidge said that the police strike in Boston was a piece of pure luck for Coolidge, especially because at first it threatened to be a catastrophe. Isn't it a general attribute of able men everywhere that they turn approaching catastrophes into good luck?

These critics say that for the first few hours he hesitated or faltered. But even a bee circles once or twice. Coolidge almost or quite immediately struck a bee line. It was at once recognized all over the country that governors might pass by that line in all states and in all cities. The truth is that Coolidge was prepared for the strike. Not that he knew there would be a strike, but he had studied experience of towns, cities and states to derive the fundamental principles of government.

The result was that in the next Republican national convention, of all the governors and senators there, Coolidge of Massachusetts was the one man who had a positive country-wide slogan, "Law and Order." Though Massachusetts is so securely Republican that it is a waste of strategy to take candidates from there, yet he was nominated. People say it was an accident that Coolidge became our vice-president. That isn't true. He was ready for it. He was directly in line for promotion.

And when a man from the state of Washington put his name before the convention at Chicago as a nominee for vice-president, the thing was all over in a moment. Coolidge was nominated practically by acclamation. He was the one man distinctly and publicly ready for promotion.

No sooner was Coolidge vice-president than he began to study his new job. For the first time in the history of this country a vice-president sat in at cabinet meetings and really prepared for the job above him.

When the presidency suddenly fell upon his shoulders he was prepared for it.

SO MUCH for the President, how about the neighbor?

As neighbors the Coolidges must be regarded as a family. Mr. Coolidge as a neighbor in the social sense is nearly negligible, but most of us other male Americans who are absent all day as breadwinners are in the same boat. If Mrs. Coolidge ever succeeded in dragging him out to make a call, she probably looked upon that as a proof of her powers, not to be tested too often. In that also, she is a typical wife. Without doubt, Mr. Cooldige frequently exasperated her. Fortunately, she has a sense of humor and a smile, and probably often needed both. But he also let her be the boss on occasion.

More than once in early morning I've seen the disgraceful sight of our mayor in his back yard with his wife's apron tied around him, sifting the ashes. My mother used that disgraceful sight as the last straw to break her son's spirited resistance to wearing her apron when it was my turn to wash those blinkity dishes. What good did it do for a boy to grow up toward escape from his mother's apron, if the mayor, on occasion, had to don his wife's apron? Later, having survived unscathed this discipline of humility, I learned that the two Coolidge boys had to render similar services to Mrs. Reckahn, the housekeeper. Humility worked with their hands and the corrective of their father's keen dry humor was the best possible preparation for their reasonably humble arrival at the White House.

Of two members of the same family, both should be ready to step into the White House.

I might conceivably vote for some other man than Mr. Coolidge for president, such as Hoover or Smith or McAdoo, but if I had to vote only for a President's wife, I couldn't conceivably vote for any one else but Mrs. Coolidge. Remember that I am a neighbor of hers, that our houses are across a back fence, and that this is a severe test. We have seen her sons grow under the guidance of this diplomat of the family. We have heard the toy horn which she blew from the back porch, humorously but inexorably summoning the boys home to mother. Wherever they might be, there was no pretending not to hear, no lingering out of sight behind a barn. I have heard my sister, 'cross the dining-table, list the best brought-up kids in the schoolroom over which she presided, and how the teacher could count absolutely in advance upon Mrs. Coolidge's cooperation in any school policy.

Mrs. Coolidge could go into a camp of immigrant shovelers, or into a diplomatic ball, and feel equally at home. She is the same on her back veranda, or in a Boston hotel, or at the kitchen sink of her husband's boyhood home in Vermont drawing glasses of water for thirsty reporters, or in the White House as one of the twin centers of the nation. You have seen her seated on a reviewing stand, or at a reception, or bowing from a train, or looking at you from the motion-picture screen—pleasant, smiling, quiet, self-contained, always interested, quietly responsive and appreciative. That is not "put on." That's just as she would be to you in your home, her home, or on Elm Street, this year, last year, and the years before that. It's just as she is to every one, everywhere, any time.

Mrs. Coolidge is not so much the first lady in the land, as she is every lady in the land. She might be nobody, or anybody, without disturbing her peace of mind or detracting from her character. Probably the fatiguing whirlpool of official life makes her often wonder whether she has any physical entity. Probably she wishes she could step out somewhere behind the hangings and let some other woman step in to take her place for a time—any other woman, at random. For she probably thinks that just as she herself is at home in every environment, every other woman could fill her present place. Be assured, Mrs. Reader, that in Mrs. Coolidge's mind, it is you who are in the White House.

Being a real democrat is the first essential to being a true aristocrat in manners. Both of the occupants of the White House fill that condition. If you wrote a prescription for an American President's wife, and then went around matching it up against all the women in the country, you would come to Mrs. Coolidge and stop.

I said that Mr. Coolidge was not, in the sense of preparedness, lucky. I'll take that back, partially. Calvin Coolidge was and is lucky in being equipped, ready made, with a President's wife. It may have been only due to his foresight.

To his opponents, Coolidge seems a paradox. He is a paradox. Coolidge makes few motions, but he gets his work done. Coolidge is difficult to listen to when making a speech face to face, but he becomes an attractive speaker over the radio. He can be sonorous: "Men must work for more than wages, factories must turn out more than merchandise, or there is naught but black despair ahead."

In political conflict, he is a jiu jitsu artist. He waits until his opponent has tangled himself all up, then Calvin pushes him over. A shove here, a shove there, the removal of a stone from the path of a natural force, and the contest is over before the opponent has had time to get started.

Probably our town's president is not now a great man, in the sense that Washington, Lincoln, Roosevelt or Wilson were great. He has not been thrown into terrible situations which develop greatness.

His only critical situation, the Boston police strike, did develop a flash of greatness. This silent, invisible man suddenly became vivid enough so that the mention of his name by a delegate from the state of Washington stampeded the convention into an unexpected vice-presidential nomination. He became vocal enough to furnish his party with a campaign slogan. Probably the present President has the capacity to be great, if a crisis should develop him. For he is simple. He is any one of us raised to the nth degree, to the presidency.

This president of ours can be relied upon to tackle any new problem as a straight, simple job. He will go at it like a workman—and he has always proved himself to be an efficient workman. Also he has the necessary touch of inspiration. It is not the wild inspiration of an outsider, but the safe practical inspiration that comes out of a fellow's job, whether it be town-wide or nation-wide.

Thirty Years on the Turf

[*Continued from page 23*]

accuracy that is not possible on the turf tracks of France and England, where it is also very nearly impossible to record fractional time. Our horses are trained and worked in the mornings over the track on which they race in the afternoon and that enables the clockers to get a line of their speed, which is not possible where private training grounds exist.

"Our reliance on the watch comes down as a heritage from the days when trotting horses were the vogue and running races were comparatively rare. The test for a great trotter was his ability to lower the existing record and timing them was a fine art where the fractional part of a second meant a whole lot.

"While a valuable aid and an indispensable check-up when a horse is working, the watch gets more people than enough into trouble unless the form that the animal has shown in his races is given careful consideration. The best proof of this is that half the professional clockers are always on the ragged edge, pretty nearly broke, although many of them get good salaries for timing the morning workouts. They know that there are "morning-glories," horses that run fast in the mornings but seem to lose heart and pace in the afternoon, when it's wanted. Yet when his watch shows an extra fast work-out the horse is rare that does not always get a bet from some clocker. He just simply can't help it. He had become a confirmed time fan and is always looking for the fast worker to beat horses whose performance in public rate them as far superior to the one who has accomplished the fast trial. Of course it happens that a horse improves on anything he has shown in public. He may have been a moderate two-year-old but improved beyond measure as a three-year-old. On the other hand he may have been a crackerjack two-year-old, like Morvich, and like him a comparative failure as a three-year-old.

"It is always a mystery to the uninitiated how a horse that has more than once won a race over a mile in, say, 1.39 will, with similar track conditions, get beaten handily, if not easily, in 1.39½ by another who has more class to him. The classy fellow beats the other up in a couple of furlongs and kills him off, coming on to win at his leisure. Morvich as a two-year-old had his field all tangled up in the first two furlongs and after that it was a procession. In a trial or in a race it's not altogether what a horse does but how he does it.

"The most important part of a trainer's job," said Hirsch with a grin in answer to a question, "is to produce winners. As a means to that end, keeping a horse's feet in proper shape is one thing of the utmost importance. American trainers have taught the rest of the world some great lessons in this respect. For any proper understanding of how to handle a horse's foot I have to thank my friend, and former employer, Mr. John E. Madden. Madden is a past grand master in the art of curing bad feet in a race-horse. No one is his superior in fashioning plates to best suit imperfect feet, thus enabling a horse to get a grip and keep sure footing, as well as insuring perfect balance. Our tracks are severe on horse's feet and constant care and attention are demanded from a trainer.

"What points do I look for in a yearling? He must have an intelligent head, with a good eye, which should be well set on with a wide jowl to a good neck. Good depth—not breadth—of chest, that means plenty of heart room; shoulders that slope well and are not loaded; deep in the girth with his ribs well sprung; short cannons, (that is to say forelegs) from knees to fetlocks; good feet. Behind the saddle he should be well coupled, not so closely but that he will have perfect freedom of action, wide hips; a straight hind leg with clean cut hocks, not coarse or fleshy, close to the ground; a good length in the angle from the hip out to the round bone and in to the stifle joint. Good gaskins, that is lower thighs; full lower quarters below the tail and good flat bone. That's about all I can think of just now," he concluded with a twinkle in his eye. "The way in which a yearling walks indicates something to a close observer, and also something pleasing in his general make-up and carriage that has been termed 'filling the eye.' "

The Labyrinth

[*Continued from page 33*]

my anxiety to join Semple. The silver pencil that I had used for stirring was within it. A truant sunbeam was playing upon the pencil's shining surface. Semple flashed a look at me. Even he had sensed the significance of this occurrence. *Light reflected on the tip of any shining object would be sufficient to produce a sort of autohypnosis in a sensitive person.* The exact words that I had used only the night before in explaining the phenomena of hypnosis to him passed clearly through my mind. An intense moment followed for both of us. Gloria's stare became more fixed, her replies to Dupont's questions more dreamy. I heard the sharp click of a drawn shade and, the next instant, the light upon the pencil was extinguished, and with it my floundering hope.

WITH the disappearance of the gleam of light, Gloria's rapt look also vanished. The mind-reading demonstration droned on—inaccurate, uninspired, dull. A tremendous depression seized me—it seemed as if the cards were stacked against innocence and youth with a vengeance. I turned my attention to Felix Dupont: he was the incarnation of suave villainy, neither too assertive nor too swaggering. But with a glint of evil triumph in his eye that no amount of acting could quench. My despairing interest in his performance was diverted by a burning sensation on the back of my hand. I looked down to discover a patch of sunlight about the size of a half dollar making a bright spot in the gloom, a patch of sunlight that had been deflected instead of completely smothered by the uneven surface of the shade.

"Have you a pocket mirror?" I whispered to Semple.

He nodded and passed me one in a cheap tin case. I pretended, for the benefit of those who had seen our by-play, to search in my eye for an imaginary cinder. And, having satisfied their fleeting curiosity, I cautiously concealed the tiny mirror in the palm of my hand and dropped it to a position where it picked up the tiny shaft of light. A school-boy trick suddenly fraught with stirring possibilities. The harnessed sunbeam flitted like a silver moth through the room and finally, at my bidding, fell squarely upon the shining surface of the pencil reposing in the glass opposite Gloria's range of vision. She gave another almost imperceptible start, clasped her hands together and looked dreamily in the direction of the light. I glanced at Semple. He nodded slightly.

At that moment Dupont had picked up a woman's beaded hand-bag. "And, now, what am I holding?" he called out.

For the first time that day Gloria's answer came unhesitatingly.

"A bag—something that looks like a bag!"

He opened the bag impudently. "And what is in it?"

"There is money in the bag."

"Think again! What is in the bag."

"Money!"

A dark scowl of impatience passed over Dupont's brow. "What do you say that for? Think again."

"There is money in that bag," came with quiet insistence from Gloria.

He cleared his brow of its betraying anger. "Well," he began, good-naturedly, "perhaps a few cents."

She shook her head. "Oh, no—there is over a thousand dollars in it."

His face went chalky white. "Come . . . come! This is a lady's bag, remember."

"Oh, no! It is not a lady's bag—it is the bag I gave you on the night—on the night—"

But before she could complete the sentence Dupont had flung the bag aside and was holding up a fountain pen.

"What am I holding, now? Use your wits! What is it?" His voice was shaking.

"A fountain pen!"

"Correct!" He turned quickly to the judge. "Is that enough, your honor?"

The judge bowed assent but, before another word could be spoken, Semple was on his feet.

"You were saying something about a bag, Miss Parks."

The light on the pencil began to quaver; my hand was shaking.

"Yes—a bag! My father's bag."

"Oh, your father had a bag, then? What sort of bag?"

"A bag that he kept all his money in."

"And you gave that bag to some one?"

"Yes. . . . I gave that bag to Mr. Dupont on the night—the night—"

"Yes, Miss Parks."

"On the night—on the night *he shot my father!*"

There was a sudden commotion. I saw Felix Dupont moving swiftly toward the door. The judge leaned forward, and pointing at the skulking figure, cried:

"Hold that man!"

The pocket mirror in my hand fell to the floor. And, in a swift blur of emotion I saw Gloria rise from her seat and hesitate a moment while her bewildered glance swept the room: a bewildered glance, waiting, as it had always done, to be ensnared. But this time, instead of fluttering helplessly into the evil imprisonment of Felix Dupont's gaze it fluttered and fell into the crystal-clear eyes of Larry Braden, who had come to his feet with a leap of youthful and triumphant ecstasy.

His Yes Means Millions

[*Continued from page 34*]

exchange their coin for the precious pasteboards of pleasure principally because Dave Keith, super-critic, likes or dislikes a theatrical offering.

In rehearsal or at premiers in Cleveland, Buffalo, Baltimore, New York, Washington, Stamford, Atlantic City, Syracuse, New Haven and dozens of other towns and cities, Mr. Keith has witnessed more than 10,000 theatrical performances.

And until this publication, he has maintained absolute anonymity so far as the public is concerned. In the "trade," of course, he is more widely known than the most advertised of our billboard products. Talk to a producer or manager,the brothers Shubert, Messrs. Ziegfeld, Belasco, Arthur Hammerstein, Dillingham, Hopkins, Brady, pere and fils, etc., and they will tell you "D. J." has salvaged and silenced, made and unmade, put over and broken more shows than any half dozen critics that ever flourished on Newspaper Row.

A laconic wire from Mr. Keith after an out of town opening results either in ominous silence from the powerful ticket brokers or an offer to purchase the first dozen orchestra rows for ten weeks; or even, as has happened once or twice, the entire orchestra and balcony for any period the dazed producer may designate.

"D. J.'s" power to make or mar may easily be recognized when it is pointed out that the great majority of theatrical offerings, comedy, drama, operetta or what not, are not any too thoroughly financed. The majority of them depends largely upon brokerage sales and first week or first fortnight's receipts to answer the all-important question: do we sink or swim?

In thirty years, the trade tells me, Dave Keith has never picked a flop. He has missed a few hits. But his mistakes have been negative, never positive.

The new shimmering Broadway that now stretches from Forty-Second Street to Walter Hampden's atelier for the intellectual, a mile north, blazes at night with electric signs galore such as "Hammond Hails," "Dale Indorses," "Benchley Boosts." And so forth.

The electrics never twinkle: "Hard-headed Dave Keith Has Ordered Twenty Thousand Tickets at $3.30 each!"

But, any producer will tell you, Mr. Keith's nod of approval contributes vastly more to the success of a show than the combined accolade of all the critics.

"Broadway calls you the Infallible," I reminded him as we sat in a Rialto coffee house and he was unreeling the cylinders of memory.

"Humph," he grunted, nibbling a frugal sandwich, "I certainly am not infallible. But I think I know pretty well by now what sort of shows people want to see. You see, I've mixed with people for fifty years and for forty-one years I've been on the inside of the show business."

Then he told me very simply the standards by which he judges a play. First and foremost, does it touch the tenderness of our souls? Then has it an appeal that will cause the average man and woman to say: "I know people like that." Is there something in it that expresses the aspirations of the average person? If a problem play, is the problem one that comes home to millions? If an operetta, does the music carry us away from the workaday world?

"Above all," explained the play scout, "I ask myself whether the play will enlist lip service. By that I mean will folks talk about it and advise other people to see it? Recently when Earl Carroll was pessimistic about 'Laff That Off' and Mr. Brady was low in mind over 'The Great Gatsby,' I told the boys they had shows that were bound to become wows. And, as it happened, I was right. Both plays were honestly written, honestly presented and had enormous mass appeal.

"And take 'The Jazz Singer,' roasted by every critic in town. A young king of tin pan alley (in the play) gives up $1,500 a week and returns home to become a rabbi. Why? Loyalty to his dead father. The facts seemed preposterous. But the playwright imagined the story that way and made you say of George Jessel: 'Wouldn't it be glorious if a son could be so loyal and so self-sacrificing?'

"Then"—the barometer of the brokers smiled—"I knew there are enough Jews in New York and enough of them visiting New York right along to keep the play running a year. So the brokers bought $50,000 worth of tickets in advance, and now it's as big a sell-out as 'Gatsby.'

"These and dozens of other plays upon which the critics and I have disagreed will all draw lip service," he further emphasized. "This sort of boosting is more valuable than all the advertising and log-rolling praise in the world."

Dave Keith likes to see plays in the rough as well as after they have been whipped into shape. Often producers are anxious to avoid a road pre-view by the broker's scout. In an effort to outwit him, they often conceal their out of town opening dates and locations. Once he received an invitation to attend a road opening in Albany when the show was really to open in Trenton.

MUCH to the astonishment of the producer, D. J.'s graying head popped up in an orchestra seat in *Trenton!*

"He was pretty fussed—that boy," laughed Keith. "Almost wept over his 'mistake.' But he made me welcome and at a midnight supper asked me how I liked the show. I advised him to change his act finales and made one or two other suggestions. When the show came to New York three weeks later, the changes had been made and it ran eleven months on Broadway."

Though he plays a lone hand in his work as a critic, Keith has "tipping connections" in every important producing office. Often stage electricians or other artisans or a friendly member of the musicians union will drop him a line and advise him to have a peep at a production being quietly offered the theater-goers of, say, Youngstown, Ohio, or Allentown, Pennsylvania.

Then D. J. will drop in at 8.15 and by midnight a wire will be in the office of his employers: "Lashed to the Mast a Wow" or "Dead Doornail a Flop." Or the wire may read: "Undecided. Erie, Pa., tomorrow."

His work is entirely individualistic. He never accepts synthetic information. His own keen, dark eyes must sweep every stage and every bit of business. Sometimes he scouts a show half a dozen times before coming to a decision as to its box-office worthiness. This, of course, keeps him out on his own "Keith circuit" the greater part of the time.

Behind Dave Keith's "infallibility" lie four decades of experience in measuring the public taste. It is exactly forty-one years ago this season that an urchin of ten wriggled his way back-stage at the old Academy of Music and braced "Red" Moran, autocrat of the supers, for a job.

"How'd you get in here?" demanded the truculent Red, frowning down upon the boy.

"Walked down from Forty-sixt' street and Thoid avenue," was the reply. "That's me block."

"Well, you kin walk right back," barked Red. Then—"Naw, don't go yet." The King of the Supers had a second thought. It was wonderfully revivifying to the drooping spirits and tired legs of the strange stripling. "Say," with a growl, "I need a waterboy for the gallery. Patti's going to sing. Twenty-five cents you'll git. Want the job?"

Want it? The theater-struck Davey Keith almost did a handspring to the gallery!

And that night the magic of divine Adeline Patti's lyric soprano played its part in attaching the heart and soul of an East Side boy to the world of make-believe.

Followed one and forty years of intimate association with the great American theater. That first season, during the engagement of the Mapleson Opera Company, young Keith served tumblers of water to the élite of New York and earned many a tip—the rate was a nickel or a dime in those thrifty times.

Union Square was the theatrical center then. In those days there were no licensed ticket brokers as we know them today. The pioneer broker or ticket speculator was one Louis Steger, who had a stand in Fourteenth Street. One night Steger said to young Dave Keith:

"Hey, Kid, you look smart. Want to sell some gallery seats for the Union Square Theater tonight?"

Gallery tickets in those days were fifteen cents. Steger charged a quarter.

Clara Morris was playing "Camille." There was a great demand for seats despite uncertainty as to the exact time when Miss Morris would appear. For this gifted and temperamental star would often hold the curtain for an hour while she slept or enjoyed a ride through Central Park. (She actually ordered a cab and rode in the park between acts one night!)

Dave snapped at Steger's offer. His commission was a nickel on each ticket he disposed of. He made two dollars the first night and Steger made him a permanant offer. This marked his official entry into the business of ticket speculation. Days, he continued his quest of education, first at Public School 27 on Third Avenue, and later at Normal School. But, odd times and evenings, he worked at the new job and made good.

IT WAS during this period that he acquired his knowledge of the wants of the public.

He watched such famous stars as Edwin Booth, Lawrence Barrett, F. L. Bangs, John McCullough, Harrigan and Hart, Richard Mansfield, E. H. Sothern, James O'Neil, McKee Rankin, Maurice Barrymore, Fanny Davenport, Charlotta Cushman, Rose Coghlan, Effie Shannon and many others bearing storied names.

He observed the methods of such noted managers as Abbey and Grau, Col. Haverley, Bartley Campbell, Henry Miner, Edward E. Rice, etc.

His mind became a catalogue in which he carefully preserved a vast fund of facts and figures. In this period, he learned showmanship. He hung about Huber's and Pastor's, became intimately acquainted with Joe Weber and Lew Fields, Lillian Russell and Louis Mann. He served a term as box office man for the famous John Robinson circus and got pretty well "wised up" on the theatrical requirements of that great domain, hitherto unknown to him, the "Road."

About this time, an industrious young man of Keith's own age moved, with his family, from Yonkers, New York, into the neighborhood. This was Joe Leblang. They became warm friends, and presently thereafter partners in business. The tie was strengthened by Keith's marriage to Joe's sister, Minnie. She bore him two boys and two girls, and to this day Minnie Keith packs Dave's battered old grip when he starts scouting.

Joe Leblang and Dave Keith fused into an ideal combination. Both were keen business men. Dave, in addition, has and still possesses a child's love of what a keen editor terms "heart hokum." To this day, Dave Keith would be weeping, openly and unashamed, over "The Old Homestead" and "Rip Van Winkle" if Denman Thompson and Joe Jefferson were alive to stir him as they did so often in the old days.

Thirty years ago, Leblang and his brother-in-law opened their first ticket agency at Thirtieth Street and Sixth Avenue. The notorious old Haymarket was across the street from "Joe Leblang's Cigar Store." The theatrical center had slowly wormed its way north. Joe and Dave had a good location and they prospered, mightily.

Leblang handled the tickets, as he does today, and Keith did the scouting. Now, one often sees 1,500 or 2,000 persons milling about the Leblang boards in New York begging one of the sixty-two clerks to tell them what is good, bad and indifferent on the metropolitan theatrical menu.

"It's a fascinating game, giving the people what they want," mused D. J. Keith, as he toyed with the slender gold ribbon of his glasses.

"And what do they want today in the theater?" I asked.

"Well, one thing quite evident," he replied, "is that the emotional upsets of the war and prohibition are subsiding. Folks want simplicity and sweetness now in their amusements. The era of the scantily clothed woman and the strenuous, exciting 'pressure' shows is passing from the stage.

"Clean comedies and comedy-dramas, such as were given us in 'Turn to the Right,' 'First Year' and 'Lightnin' are again coming into their own. Now the public wants the theater to reflect American life honestly, truthfully and decently.

"Remember, at heart, we Americans are a very elemental people. We respond to the same appeal our grandparents responded to. Men and women sin today just at they did a hundred years ago. Villainy is the same though it may cut its hair a bit differently.

"We reward virtue and hiss vice just as we did in the old days of melodrama. Sex is sex just as it always has been."

Mr. Keith maintains elaborate records, reaching back almost three decades. When he witnesses a performance reminiscent of some great success of the past, he digs out figures showing net profit and loss of the old hit. He also maintains a sort of "box office batting average" of the leading men and women stars. His peculiarly efficient mental and emotional calipers and footrule enable him to measure within a few weeks the length of a run and the drawing power of any particular actor.

"This spring," he explained, "the Shuberts put Al Jolson for four weeks into the sagging 'Artists and Models' at the Winter Garden. Jolson is the greatest present day drawing card because he is not only an artist, an actor, a singer but he has the rare genius of selling himself personally to every man, woman and child in the audience.

"I could have told you before Jolson went into the show that he would attract (and his appearance was for a few minutes only at each performance) $12,000 extra into the box office each week. Under his contract, this meant $6,000 a week for Al, $6,000 for the Shuberts.

"FANNIE BRICE is the Jolson among women. She has tremendous box office value. There are other good ones—Eddie Cantor, Florence Moore, Lenore Ulric, Jack Donohue, of 'Sunny,' etc.—but none rank with Al and Fannie.

"Speaking of Donohue, the brokers would have bought a million dollars' worth of advance tickets for 'Sunny' if guaranteed Donohue would remain in the cast. It may surprise you but Marilyn Miller could have withdrawn from 'Sunny' any time and the box office would not have been affected at all. Merely because Donohue was the man who was making the show a wow and lip service (as reflected in our sales and what people told our men) was giving him his reward."

"Lip service" shows and not those manufactured by synthetic criticisms hold the only possibility for permanent success in the theater, Mr. Keith holds. He reads only three dramatic columns, the Kansas City *Star*, Baltimore *Sun* and Boston *Traveler*. These reviewers are all anonymous.

"The trouble with most critics today," the mild-mannered little man suddenly exploded, "is they write about themselves, not about the things that are unfolded before their eyes! Why, William Winter, the greatest critic that ever lived I think, never permitted a line of personal advertising. He would have appreciated Eugene O'Neill, who was born twenty years too early and twenty years too late for his time. In 1942 we shall have O'Neill revivals just as we have Ibsen revivals today. You'll see. I went to 'Desire Under the Elms' a dozen times. I insisted it be moved uptown to a larger theater. It's the strongest, most moving play I have ever seen."

Mr. Keith insists the road can no longer be "bunked" by being fed inferior productions.

"You notice David Belasco, last of the really great producers of my youth, never sends out a road company," he commented. "He sends his original company after the New York run is over. The other managers are slowly learning that Dave is right. They are learning also to search for honest, strong plays that will help us to a better understanding of life."

The super-critic pulled out an old-fashioned snap-case watch, reached for his bag and rose.

"Got to drop up to Hartford tonight," he sighed. "A new comedy. Hope it turns out to be another "Is Zat So?"

And one sort of felt if any suggestion of Dave Keith's could transmute the "new comedy" into an "Is Zat So?" Dave would give of his store of knowledge, gladly and hopefully.

Farming for Corn-Cob Pipes

[*Continued from page 41*]

the southern Appalachian Mountaineers to the Washington presidential chair each cob pipe devotee clings unchangingly to his especial style—or styles.

Those mountaineers, by the way, no longer make their own. They buy big-bowled cob pipes made in Franklin County, Missouri. The bigger the bowls the better they like them. The hard coal miners of eastern Pennsylvania prefer cobs with bone mouthpieces. Ohio smokers lean toward cobs equipped with straight reed stems, because when spring sap flows in hard maple trees they can remove the stems from trusty pipes and use them as sap conductors. The Irish like short-stemmed pipes—maybe to match their noses. Germans like long-stemmed pipes of goose-neck styles. But the average confirmed American smoker prefers to have an assortment of styles—one for each day in the week, as it were.

Champ Clark took pride in smoking a corn-cob pipe made in his own congressional district, and distributed hundreds of the same kind at formal dinners. President Harding smoked a mammoth Union pipe made from a cob nearly two and a half inches in diameter—the largest cob pipe ever made—presented to him by Director Leslie Cole, who was then with the United

States Department of Justice at Washington.

Charley Reinhard treasures letters from many smoking friends whom he has never met.

Charley says that cob pipe popularity comes not so much from its modest price as from its entrancing flavor. A few million smokers agree with him. But I am inclined to think Charley's almost unique personality had a good deal to do with it. When his fellow citizens took him out of a small-town general store and told him to make and sell cob pipes his salary was fixed at $900 a year and he had never been farther from home than St. Louis.

For the first seven years of his career as a cob pipe man he had hard sledding. He got orders and did business, but not always at a profit. There was a good deal of fierce competition in the field. He stayed with his cob pipes, and his backers stayed with him. Although his company stock was quoted on the Union streets at less than half of par, it was distributed among only eleven holders when the tide turned in 1914. And it is a matter of record that of the original $25,000 stock, $4,500 is still in the company treasury. Naturally none of it is for sale.

While the fortunes of the National Cob Pipe Works were thus being advanced, sundry other young and old cob pipe factories in and out of Missouri rose and fell. One Indiana concern started with splendid equipment and much flourish of trumpets. Two years later Charley bought the machinery of that Indiana plant and moved it with several carloads of cobs to Union. The odd part of that incident was that both machinery and cobs were found to be first-class for making pipes. But the Indiana peopl had not been able to make the cob pipe game go.

A cob pipe man has to sell his idea to the farmer who plants the corn as well as to the wholesaler or retailer who buys his pipes. I have already hinted at the belief held by many farmers that cob corn is harder on the soil than ordinary feed corn because it must have such a sturdy stalk and such heavy ears. When the National Cob Pipe Works entered the cob pipe field it advertised for cobs at twenty-eight cents a hundred and got them. It is getting all it wants now at from fifty to sixty cents a hundred. But during the war, when farmers were getting fabulous figures for their wheat, oats and corn, they were not interested in contracting for Collier corn-cobs. Charley and his assistants went far afield. They tried giving seed to farmers around Jacksonville and Kankakee, Illinois. The results were only fairly satisfactory. Some of the cobs were big but not hard enough. For pipes the cobs must be as hard as wood.

Then Charley learned that the bottom lands of the drained St. Francis basin in southeastern Missouri produced cobs both large and hard. He journeyed to southeastern Missouri. Among the biggest corn farmers of that day and region was one Mr. Stubblefield. Charley made his proposition. It was a good one. Charley offered to pay eighty-five cents per hundred for cobs, on the track near Stubblefield. Charley, in his stubborn way, stayed with the stubborn Mr. Stubblefield, and smiled. In the end Mr. Stubblefield accepted Charley's seed corn, and his contract. In one year Charley paid Stubblefield $22,000 for cobs, and Stubblefield has continued to raise cob corn for many years.

But it is not only Charley's smiling stubbornness that puts him and his factory over. The big cobs his factory must have can not be shelled by ordinary shellers. Even a four-hole sheller driven by gasoline power balks at the giant ears from real cob-corn. So manufacturers produce a special corn-cob sheller. Charley Reinhard loans these special shellers to corn-cob growers with whom he has contracts. Sometimes the National Cob Pipe Works has thousands of dollars' worth of these special shellers in distant fields.

The old-time rural general merchant watches his manufacture with all-seeing eyes. He is punctilious about everything in the factory from letterheads to shipping cartons, but he is most attentive to the men who create the pipes. Mere wood-turners will not do when it comes to turning cobs. Some cobs are harder than hard wood. It takes experience and delicate skill to handle a high-speed cob lathe without burning the turning tools. Six distinct trades—sawyers, turners, fillers, coaters, toppers, and slickeners—are drawn on to complete the simplest ten-cent cob pipe. Some of these experts in the art have been making cob pipes under Charley Reinhard for a dozen years.

AT THE end of my extended stay in Union—for I was one of the two tourists mentioned at the beginning of this narrative—I addressed this question to Charley Reinhard, cob pipe maker to the world.

"What is the best method of coloring a corn-cob pipe?"

Charley studied this question while the characteristic smile faded from his mobile face. Then, as solemnly as he had gazed that morning at Frank Cooper, the local photographer, he gazed at me out of his big brown eyes and judicially replied:

"They say that whisky, generously applied to the inside of a cob-pipe bowl before that pipe is broken in, gives it both color and atmosphere."

"I wonder if that is really true," I countered cautiously.

There was a long and eloquent pause.

Thus we parted.

Freida Was a Lady

[*Continued from page 49*]

down the sides of his mouth and the stalks disappeared as if traveling into a bottomless pit. It was terrible.

That was the end of the world for Freida. When Charlie Mace, making desperate efforts to at least present a showing of some conciliation between his awkward pair, led them again into the ring, Freida didn't even run. She just stood, eyes set, trunk listless, knees caving slightly, a shell of an elephant in the last pit of despair. Charlie Mace tried cajolery. He tried to drag her over into a position from which he could begin negotiations toward an *entente cordiale*. He even got behind her and kicked; it was useless.

"Oh, Lord!" he exclaimed hopelessly and began the retreat from the ring. Only to halt. Papa Harris was approaching, wearing a determined air.

"Well, Charlie," he said, "how about it?"

"Oh, about the training?" asked Charlie Mace, striving very hard to be chipper. "Oh, yes sir, about the training. Well, I'm getting 'em used to each other. Freida didn't run this morning."

"Didn't look like she did much of anything, from where I watched," said Papa Harris, then again assumed his bruskness. "Let's see, you've been here three weeks, haven't you?"

"Yes, sir, three weeks, come tomorrow."

"And nothing's happened yet?"

"Well," he admitted it grudgingly, "I wouldn't say that. Of course—"

"I'm not referring to the wagons being busted up and the seats rammed into and the side-walling of the tent worn off," said Papa Harris. "I'm talking about this act you were going to fix up for me. With Elsie as the star."

"WELL," Charlie looked very hard at his bullhook, "you can't do everything in a minute."

"No, and you can't do anything in a year, from the looks of things." Suddenly he veered to the point of the matter. "I'm a little tired of this stalling."

"Well, now, Mr. Harris—" Charlie Mace said it with a choking in his throat. "I ain't interested in myself—over just having a job. I really ain't, Mr. Harris. I want to see Elsie—"

"You know she's studying that stenograph again?"

"Yes, sir. And while I know it ain't my fault and all that, I'm willing to do the right thing. If you think Mr. Breen could do any better—"

"Old Breen?" asked Papa Harris with a pull at his mustache, "he's worse than you are."

"Well, I don't know just what's to be done about it," came desperately. "We're here and that's that. We've just got to wait until—"

"Do we?" asked Papa Harris. "Not if I know it. I'm either going to have some peace around this show or know the reason why. Before you brought that animated piece of elephant hide over here, I at least got some work out of Snyder. Now I can't get any; he's too busy trying to see what Freida's doing while he's away from the menagerie tent. As for her, the sooner I get rid of her, the happier I'll be."

"Get rid of her?" Charlie gasped. "Why, Mr. Harris, you ain't goin' to sell her?"

"Sell her, my eye. Who'd buy her? I'm going to send her back."

Then he walked on, and Charlie Mace merely gawked—at Freida, at Snyder, at the top of the tent. After a while, Elsie walked through the big top and Charlie called to her. But she came only close enough for Charlie to see that her eyes were red, as from weeping.

"Papa blames me for the whole thing," she said huskily. "If I ever get away from this old circus—"

"Now don't talk that way, Elsie! Maybe it won't turn out that way. I just been thinkin' —an' I got an idea. You just wait."

"That's all I've been doing." Then Elsie reached very hurriedly for her handkerchief and walked out of the tent. It acted as a spur to Charlie Mace. He hurried the elephants back to her line, left a cage-tender on guard to see that Freida got no sugar-cane, and raced for his trunk, where he brought forth paper and pencil for a very important missive.

"Now, Mr. Botts," he concluded his letter, "if he does send Freida back, I suggest that maybe you could trade her for three or four baby elephants, maybe off the Karowan Shows, and if you could, I've got a swell idea for a big act in which a lady plays the star part and everybody thinks she's the trainer and it'll make a swell act. I would do it over here, but they won't part with Snyder, being short of horses like they are and needing Snyder to do all the work, and a flock of baby angels couldn't work nowhere around where he is at. So as soon as you get this, let me know what you think, as I am awful anxious to put on this act and know just the lady that would work in it swell."

After he had mailed the letter, he felt better. He even felt good enough to relent for a moment and allow Freida to have one tiny bit of sugar-cane. It was a bad piece of relaxation. Freida begged harder than ever after that, and when her begging failed, slumped into new depths. While Snyder, his anger heightened by the loss of even that tiny morsel, reached over and crowned her heavily with his trunk before Charlie Mace could interfere. The pachydermic peace of the Harris World-Beater Shows immediately grew less peaceful than ever.

The state of discord increased. Even as Charlie Mace's nervousness increased, as a day passed, and two and three and four. He had given up thoughts of training now—his sole object in life was to be very chipper and very secretive whenever he saw Elsie Harris, and make remarks about the fact that she could study that fool pothook book all she wanted, but that she'd never use it—not when his new idea panned out. But there was a falsity to his tone which increased steadily as the mails failed, day after day, to bring him any reply. Then Sunday morning, as the show was set up and performers, owner, workmen and teamsters planned for a whole day of rest at a hotel, leaving only a skeleton crew on the lot, Charlie Mace, fighting back his nervousness, made a quick search for Papa Harris and blurted an announcement.

"If you don't mind me taking a horse," he said, "I'll ride over to the Botts Show today. It's only twenty miles off."

"How about that bull?" asked Papa Harris.

"Oh, she'll be all right. Nothing to do but sit around, and I've fixed that with Breen."

THEN, having received his permission, Charlie Mace moved frantically for the horse tents, dodging Elsie on the way. He wasn't in the mood right now to see Elsie. Or rather, to be seen by her. Because Elsie might ask questions about his grand idea—and that was something to be avoided. Charlie had received a telegram that morning. It had been very blunt and to the point:

"Just got letter, delayed in mails. If that bull comes back here, never mind coming with her. Counted on you to put that deal over and have borrowed three thousand for a working bull, which we need badly. Elephant here. Money spent. Got to have cash which counted on from Freida. H. H. Botts."

That telegram had made Charlie Mace's mission a bit difficult. And, as he rode along, he realized that it also had made Freida a drug on the market.

"Darned fool ole bull!" he exclaimed; a remark, incidentally which Old Breen was likewise repeating as he sat in front of Freida in the menagerie tent, and argued futilly against her constant whimpering. Freida had seen Charlie Mace depart. Then Freida had waited for him to return—in vain. Now Freida was lonely.

So she fretted, and shifted, raising her feet dolorously, or merely standing and shuffling them, her limp trunk waving awkwardly with her movements. Sad eyed was Freida, an orphan lady elephant, with a strange keeper and a roughneck companion who steadily refused to absorb even the primary requirements of a gentleman. For two hours Old Breen strove to quiet her. Then, seeing little sense to ruining a perfectly good holiday by listening to the wails of a homesick elephant, he rose, cussed Freida again, and went downtown. Thereby, he helped the doldrums of a lugubrious elephant not at all.

At least he had been a human. At least he had been a diversion from this thing by her side, and a deterrent to an absolute domination. But now he was gone, and Snyder, feeling an entire lack of restraint, promptly took the last vestige of Freida's hay, and by way of piling insult upon insult, blew all the water out of her drinking barrel. When evening came, and Old Breen came to the lot for feeding, Snyder only waited until he had deserted the tent in his haste for a night in a real bed downtown, and then Snyder repeated his insulting performance, finishing in a flare of glory by yanking a final wisp out of Freida's trunk, even as she raised it to a waiting mouth. After that he snorted, and blasted dust eddies, and reaching out with his trunk, yanked Freida's ears. He edged large gobs of hay toward her, waited until she reached for them, then jerked them away again. But once, as he did this, something round and heavy dropped from the mass. It was a foot long, and it rolled to one side, unnoticed either by the cantankerous Snyder or the perturbed Freida. She was too busy being miserable and Snyder too occupied with deviltry to see a hunk of sugar-cane. Thus the evening went on in high dudgeon and reptilian lowness; night followed the same program, until at last Old Breen returned and extinguished the one flickering gasoline flare. After that, Snyder composed himself to pachydermic snoring and Freida rested a bit herself, as a lady elephant will do, once a horrid man has temporarily passed out of her life. But it didn't last long. Dawn creeps early into a menagerie tent in mid-summer.

With its first gray hint of light Freida was awake, and feeling nervously about her in the semi-darkness. It might have been a dream, and then it might not—the chances were for the latter, inasmuch as from somewhere quite near her trunk, there still emanated the odor which had brought her from slumber—a sweet, saccharine perfume. Her trunk began to curl slowly along the ground. It reached that neglected object, and clamped greedily upon it. Then it raised to her mouth, and Freida began to chew, greedily, noisily. Sugar-cane! Sweet succulent sugar-cane!

The joy lasted only an instant. Evidently Snyder had slept with one ear open; he was fully awake now, and blinking against the half-light, at last to ascertain a good eight inches of succulency protruding from his rival's lips. He poked forth his trunk and grasped the loose end. Then he yanked. But Freida, a fat lady starved for her sugar, held on. That was fatal.

Only an instant did Snyder hesitate. Then he furled his trunk and squealed. He leaned heavily to one side and with his bulging body, edged the nervous lady at his left about into a position in which the batting would be best. After that, he let her have it. Vainly she tried to avoid him. Vainly she trumpeted. Vainly she shifted and squealed and grunted and begged as the blows rained flail-like upon her—the punishment continued. The mouth of the belabored elephant opened wide, dropping the sugar-cane at the very feet of her oppressor—it accomplished nothing. Snyder, disdained sugar-cane, surrender and all. He lunged at his picket chain, and pulled the stake from the ground. Then trunk high, feet kicking viciously before him, he swung forward to give this interloper the kind of a licking which she really deserved. A bellow of terror and Freida went to her haunches, putting her heart into a solid pull at her chain. The ground rose, and a stake with it. A moment more and Freida, trumpeting her concern, took out a section of the menagerie sidewall and headed for the great open spaces, while a maddened Snyder, slightly tangled in his chains, came as swiftly as possible in her wake.

FOR a time, it was merely a race, with Freida, urged on by fear, doing her utmost. Gradually, however, as her wind shortened, she slowed her pace, and looked over her shoulder. Snyder was far behind her, striving to make up with three legs what Freida was doing with two, and her terror slightly abating, a lonely elephant looked inquiringly about her, as if to determine what a lady could do, out in the cold, cruel world at dawn. Evidently there was nothing, so she moved onward, jogging tremulously at a half trot. A quarter of a mile went by. A half. Then Freida halted abruptly, and, moving to a rail fence, stuck her trunk inquiringly over it, into the very midst of the waving stalks which awaited her there. She yanked at the nearest one and tasted it. Then she shook herself in a shimmying motion which ended at the tip of her tail, and with kittenish forgetfulness of all past troubles, moved straight on through by the simple operation of knocking down the fence. Sugar-cane—fields of it. Miles of it!

High upon a hill, an early rising farmer, treading forth to his work of the day, halted, looked, shouted wildly and as wildly waved his arms. Then he ran back to the house and got his shotgun. He came out again, fired into the air, watched results, waved his arms again, then merely stood and yelled. While down there in the field, where a fulsome, elephantine lady stood in the center of a paradise of fattening food, the slaughter grew to proportions little less than tremendous.

A quarter of an hour passed. A half hour after that. Suddenly, Freida, her trunk loaded with saccharine stalks, ceased eating. She grunted—a strange grunt, with a note of piteous uncertainty about it. Then forgetful of the joys all about her, she went to her knees, careened to one side and rolled. It didn't help a bit. Freida was swelling marvelously. She tried it again, only to halt with heavily concentrated attention. A bulky form had displayed itself over the edge of a rise in the road a hundred yards away, raised his trunk, trumpeted with triumph at the sight of his prey, and now was moving forward. Wearily, dazedly, Freida staggered to her feet, and with bleared eyes, let him come. Nothing mattered much now—two hundred pounds of sugar-cane was in the throes of fermentation and Freida was on the outside of it. Closer came the belligerent Snyder, eddying the road-dust with outbursts from a low-slung trunk. Then, at the fence, he halted for just a moment and seemed to think it over. For Freida had not budged.

There was something about her spraddled stance, and saggy eyes that indicated that she stood at an elephantine Marne. A pachyderm full of loneliness and one full of colic are two entirely different things. It hurt to run, and besides that, Freida's temper had been mounting, strangely, unexplainably. And as Snyder at last broke through the fence, she waddled forward, grunted with the pain of it, met him half way and turned loose a trunk that, all unknown to a lonely lady, had longed for nothing but this!

Up on the hill, a farmer yelled louder than ever, then sat down and merely rocked his head in his hands. Where there had been one elephant, there now were two, leaping at each other with flail-like blows of lashing trunks, and bellowing enormously.

Freida was gentle no longer. Colic had made a vast difference. Wildly she swatted the gentleman before her and knocked him in the road. Then, before he could recover she moved herself and all her colic forward, walloped him a few times more, jumped on him while he roared in surprise and pain, and then, as he crawled to his feet, she lowered her head and butted him back into the field again. That only made her the madder—he was in the midst of sugar-cane that she had come to regard as her own, and colic, past sorrows, fears and temerities all forgotten, she waltzed forward to the administration of a beating such as only a pachyderm of her heft could give. And all of a sudden she realized what she was doing—that she was whipping a being who had whipped her, who had terrorized her and browbeat and bulldozed and bullyragged her. It affected her greatly. So much in fact that the next time she butted him, Synder sailed cleanly over the fence, without even scraping a bar. Thus the revenge went on.

At last, a whimper. Followed by a stronger one, and that by blasts of terror. Snyder, the fight gone from him forever, merely rolled now, helpless, abject, while Freida, a new Freida indeed, her colic aided vastly by the violent exercise, reached into the field, grasped a trunkload of sugar-cane, waved it high in triumph, discarded it as another twinge went through her, butted the thoroughly beaten Synder to his feet, and then, a proud woman in her proper station at last, lambasted him into the beginning of a return to the circus tents. Having done this, she remembered that back in the tent there was such a thing as hay. So she went too, moving Snyder along with flailings of her trunk when he got in the way, and Snyder did not resist.

Up on the hill, a farmer went for his horse. Up on another hill, a second horseman moved sleepily along, seeing nothing, hearing nothing. For things had not been so good with Charlie Mace. No, Mr. Botts didn't want baby elephants. He didn't want a girl star. Most of all, he wanted neither Freida nor Charlie Mace!

A half hour passed. Slowly Charlie Mace turned upon the circus lot and edged toward the menagerie. He opened his eyes. He gaped. Then he leaped from his saddle.

"Oh, Lord!" he exclaimed. There in the bright sunlight of the rapidly heightening day was a rent in the sidewall. And tracks leading away. Hastily he looked within, and breathed again; Snyder and Freida stood side by side within the menagerie. They hadn't gotten out after all!

The relief was only momentary. The sound of hoofs came beating hard upon the road. Then the form of a horseman, who rode menacingly toward Charlie Mace.

"You're the man that's got these elephants, ain't you?" he asked. There was no use denying it. Anyway, Charlie had guessed.

"Yeh, but look here! Don't you try to tell me that they've been out on a rampage together. I know different. Why they wouldn't no more—"

"THEN why ain't you been up on the hill by my house watchin' 'em?" asked the farmer. "Don't you try to tell me nothing either. 'Tain't enough that this here big elephant—that one right there—'tain't enough that it should walk into my sugar-cane patch and eat up everything for fifty feet around. It's got to pick on that other one an' knock him all over the place. There's a hundred dollars' worth of sugar-cane flattened out where this big bully tore into that littler one—say, I seen it all; even when this overgrown one boosts the little guy over the fence!"

"You mean the little one boosted the big one," corrected Charlie.

"I mean the big one boosted the little one. I seen it, didn't I? The big one was there first; it'd eaten enough sugar-cane to fill a freight car and ought've been satisfied. But when the littler one—"

"Sufferin' cats!" gasped Charlie Mace. "Sufferin' calico cats! He went at her when she was full o'—you wait here!" he commanded of the surprised farmer, then turned hastily toward the bull line. "Freida!" he called. "Freida. Hear me? Tails, there! Tails!"

Freida opened sleepy eyes. Freida raised a trunk which again possessed its girlish curl. She grasped the tail of Snyder, and for good measure, yanked until the skin stretched on the other elephant's back and Snyder howled with anguish. But he only stood and bellowed. Charlie Mace's voice heightened.

"Good girl! Good girl, Freida! Push him over to the left side! That's right. Now get around him and push him this way. No—over there—that's it, take him with your head. Now, tails again — tails, Freida! Atta baby!"

Whereupon he ran back to the waiting man. He talked fast—and faster. He argued. He whispered, and the man grinned.

"All right, if that's the size of it. But you'd better be there by noon, or I'll go for the sheriff."

"I will—I will!" said Charlie Mace. "Give me something with your name on it—so I'll know where to come." Then, as he glanced over his shoulder, and noticed two forms, arriving upon the circus lot from town. "Here! Help me straighten out this sidewall and then—get out!"

Five minutes later Charlie Mace was again alone. Once more he turned to the elephant line, and gave his commands.

"Tails, Freida! Atta girl! Now, right! Left! Circle him! That's the stuff—do it again! Lookit him—stands there like a tub of fish! You've got him, ole girl! You've got him! Tails again!"

Whereupon Charlie Mace swooped under the sidewall.

"Mr. Harris!" he called. "Elsie! Come here, you two, quick! Come a runnin'!"

Along toward noon a very chipper young man drove in a buggy to a farmhouse on a hill. He handed the man who awaited him there a check, and the farmer, as farmers will do, scrutinized it with due care.

"Here," he said at last, "I don't want to cheat you. This is made out for a hundred and twenty-five. I said—"

"I know," said Charlie Mace, "you said a hundred. I just tacked that other on there for good measure. And," he asked, as he nodded toward a girl in a blue dress and many giggles, who awaited him in the buggy, "now that you look at her, ain't she worth it?"

Sandy Burr

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Probably I was foolish about that. I suppose what really bothered me was that we'd get to talking and laughing and they'd seem like regular fellows and then I'd steady back and look at them and it would come over me that they weren't regular fellows at all but mighty attractive girls and dangerous as the devil and I'd get cagey again and bring Roddy into it and make him sit up and beg for pieces of cookies.

Well, it was most eleven when I came partly to my senses and got up and said: "Well, I must be going."

They both laughed. Watkins said, "All right. We'll let you."

And Wood explained, "We have to get up early."

I said I oughtn't to have stayed so late, but they laughed some more and insisted they'd enjoyed it and that they didn't see many people, they were so busy, and I'd better come out in the daytime, when I could see the ducks. I said I could come Sunday, and they thought that would be fine. And then Roddy and I drove back and put up the car and walked to the boarding-house through the sleepy little village. I was a long while getting to sleep. Maybe it was the coffee. And maybe it was those two girls. I don't know.

I went out there that next Sunday afternoon and saw all those hundreds and hundreds of pure white ducks with bills of orange yellow and blue eyes. They were all White Pekins. Wonderful big fellows, weighing eight or ten pounds apiece. They were in runways of dry gravel that sloped down to the water, with low fences between that you could step over. There was a little wooden railway with a car to carry the quantities of food down along the runs. The houses were simple, with dry gravel floors and hay in each one so they could keep their feet warm. You see, a duck's feet are kind of sensitive. There was a good-sized shed for the killing and dressing, racks for hanging the dressed carcasses, special crates for forced feeding, oh, all sorts of things. Quite a plant. And you ought to have heard those two talk, both at once, when they got to explaining. They sure did know ducks.

Wood did the cooking and Watkins kept the books. They divided up the housework.

I WAS getting along very comfortably in Little River. I opened an account in the bank there, and was able to put away fifteen to twenty dollars every week. After the first month I had a raise and salted down between twenty and thirty. And every little while there was extra money to be picked up driving evenings for some of the shore people who were staying down late in their cottages. I didn't draw out my Carversville account but arranged by mail to transfer it to the savings department so it could begin piling up a little interest. That seemed to me safer than putting it all in one place. By this time I knew most of the folks around the village. I was always called Sandy at the garage, and people outside heard the name and took to calling me by it. I kind of liked that. It gave me the feeling of belonging. And I knew well enough by that time that I wanted to belong in just such a decent little village. There were interesting old houses in the place that I learned to like through hearing Wood and Watkins talk. They were nuts on antique furniture and handsome doorways and all such.

It was a good deal of an education for me. I even picked up some odds and ends of the history of Little River and the country around. It was interesting. And I liked the feeling of old traditions that I came to have and almost to feel myself a part of. We hadn't had much in the way of traditions out West. I even came to like the sleepiness of it. You couldn't help feeling that folks who had so much back of them, so much family and history, so much to be proud of, really, couldn't get carried away by fuss and jazz and all the upset of modern life and the way newer places could and did. I couldn't help thinking a lot about what Jack Wilson said one time. Maybe you remember. It was about needing something you could hold on to. Well, I had begun to feel that I could hold on to Little River. Oh, I won't say that there wasn't a roughish crowd of fellows and girls that hung around on the main street at night, but they didn't seem to represent the village. They weren't the workers.

As for my main business of asking Jane Wood those questions I had begun to feel more willing to wait until I knew her better and could have a chance to talk alone with her, so that it would seem to come up naturally. It was pretty hard to catch her alone. She was busy and Watkins was almost always around. And once or twice on Sundays they entertained people from New York who drove out for the week-end and slept at the inn. They all had a lot of fun together that I couldn't take much part in. I always got shy at those times and felt a good deal like a boob. But Wood was awfully nice about it, treated me as if I belonged just as much as those older friends and made an effort to include me in their goings-on. And Watkins, though I began to see that she must be a little older and quite lot wiser in the ways of the world, kept right being direct and natural and taking me as a atter of course. She and I got into the habit kidding each other. But you couldn't kid ood. There was a real girl. Sometimes she emed so simple and sort of wide open about erything that the first thing I knew I was worying about her. Couldn't help it. She made e kind of want to take care of her. She did. erhaps you know how I mean. She seemed ore like a child. But then at other times she emed almost wise and adventurous as Watins. One thing about the two of them I began see into, just from the way they had taken e up. Both of them were awfully interested just living. They never did anything beause people might have thought they ought to ut just downright because they wanted to. hey really felt and lived that way. Someimes, when I'd fall to thinking about Wood, it lmost scared me. I mean the fear of what she ight get drawn into. I'll confess I don't alays see just where those modern independent irls get off. But they liked me. I knew that. nd I couldn't help feeling that they didn't look uch deeper. If they liked you, they just aturally took you in, and if they didn't like you, hey forgot you. That was all there was to t. Of course I was glad they liked me. It ade things a lot pleasanter for me. And I'll ay I liked them.

An interesting couple lived at the boardingouse, a Mrs. Archibald and her son. She as a little bit of a thing, not a bit taller than Wood and Watkins, with white hair and bright rown eyes and a lot of finely criss-crossed rinkles in her face. When she was young she ad taught school there and after her husband ied she went back to it and kept it up for wenty years. They were awfully fond of her in e village, and when she finally had to quit hey gave her a small pension. She couldn't ave been very young when she married, beause she was all of seventy by this time, and arry, her son, wasn't more than twenty-five or wenty-six. We sat at the same table in the ining-room, and I took to her from the first beause she smiled a lot and was jolly about hings. One Sunday she asked me to her room r tea, and I was embarrassed at first over the ay she pushed a big Morris chair up to the able for me to sit in and then brought another ttle table for herself. Of course I jumped ght up to help her, but she wouldn't let me uch a thing, and then I saw that Harry was aking his head at me. No, you just had to t her do all the heavy work. I suppose she ok a pride in showing you how well and active e was. It was real. Come to think of it, ery likely she enjoyed showing herself that she ould still do it. She soon began calling me andy, like most everybody else. Took me on, ally, as a kind of extra son. I still have a silk necktie she knit for me. One Sunday she made me take her out to the duck farm. The girls made a big fuss over her. I could see that she was a little staggered by Watkins' bluntness and her cigarets, but I'll say she was a sport about it. She finally even tried to smoke one and we all laughed a lot.

AND speaking of pride in things, maybe she hated that son of hers. Maybe she did! She was just about crazy over him. When I first came to Little River, Harry had been working at the garage with Jim. Then he got back a job he'd had before as local agent for the express company. I liked Harry. He was a big fellow that used to play on the high-school football team over at Riverhead. He was shrewd and clever, had done well in the A. E. F. over in France, coming out of that mess a sergeant with quite a record for heroism. When you came to know him you could see that he was ambitious in a quiet way. His mother had been set on putting him through Yale, where his father had gone, but the war had kind of spiked that plan. When it was over he may have felt he was a little too old, or perhaps they just didn't have enough money. I don't know.

One night when he had gone back to the express office to work on his books and get up a report Mrs. Archibald asked me to come into her room. She was smiling even more than usual, and her eyes were bright and a little wet from excitment.

She asked me right off, before I could shut the door, "Did Harry tell you?"

I said no, he hadn't told me a thing.

"It's quite wonderful, Sandy. More wonderful than it sounds. Some of our best men, Mr. Burlinghame in the bank and Joseph Wilder who owns the big store and several others have started an independent express line to run through here from Riverhead to New York. Trucks, you know. They're buying one big truck at first, and will put on more as soon as the business is established. Harry is to be manager."

"That's fine!" I said. "He's resigning his job then?"

"Oh, yes. Mr. Burlinghame and Mr. Wilder picked him the first thing because he understands the express business. And then he knows trucks and motors. He starts right in at a salary of ten dollars a week more than he was getting over at the station, and has an interest in the profits of the business besides."

"Oh, that's splendid!" I said. I was really glad. It made me feel good just seeing how happy she was. She reached up then and patted my shoulder.

"I'll just whisper this to you, Sandy," said she, and she couldn't have been sweeter about it if she had been my own mother, "I've told Harry he ought to be able to find a place for you too as soon as the business grows a little."

I said that that would be fine, but my spirits went down some. I knew what that trucking business meant. Night driving and Sunday work and all that. My first thought was that if I did get into it I mightn't be able to see much of Wood and Watkins, and after all that was what I had come to Little River for. But of course, I couldn't say anything to Mrs. Archibald about that. Anyhow she was so bubbling with happiness over Harry's chance to have a real interest in the new business that I wouldn't for the world have let her see I felt any hesitation about it. But she was too excited over it anyway to notice any change of expression on my face. She explained that the men associated with Harry were going into the venture as a side line apart from their regular business and didn't care to have their names appear in it until it was solidly established. In fact, Harry had made her promise not to talk about it at all, but she felt sure he wouldn't mind my knowing. And of course I told her I wouldn't peep. I decided right then not even to let him know she had told me.

Harry got his truck within a week, a powerful big brute with a twelve-ton body. And before the month was out he had another, a fast light truck. He opened an office in his own name over the drug-store in the little frame building that backed up against the garage property. One thing I was sorry about was that Harry was so busy. Before that he and I had fallen into the habit of passing ball at noon time and some early mornings in the side yard of the boarding-house. My leg was getting stronger all the time, and I jumped at the chance to get out and step around on it. I kind of liked to get my hands on the old ball again, too. But now Harry didn't have any free time. Whenever he wasn't out on the road he was either sleeping or working on the trucks.

It was interesting to see how fast his business grew. He bought a new suit in New York that first week that cost him fifty or sixty dollars if it cost a cent. Most every morning and evening you saw the big truck standing beside the drug-store just a few rods from our garage door, and it 'most always was loaded high with furniture and crates of chickens and ducks and garden truck and sometimes building material. We talked some about it, he and I. He told me that they were running as far east as Greenport. That was one day when he had a lot of shipwright stuff and a new sharpie piled high on the truck for one of the yacht builders down at the Port. A few days after the new truck came and while we had it in the garage greasing the transmission and going over the grease cups and tuning up the motor he told me he had something to say to me. As soon as I could I walked out to the door, and he looked up and down the street and then asked, "Want to make a little real money, Sandy?"

The natural thing for me to have said would have been, "Lead me to it," but something in his eye and in the tone of his voice set me thinking pretty quick. It wasn't that he was hang-dog or anything like that. He acted perfectly sure of himself and most awfully wise. But he was cautious, and I knew pretty well that he was studying me.

"Well," I said, "I'm generally glad to do that."

He looked me over still more closely. "Do you know anything about this proposition, Sandy?"

"The trucking business? Not a thing."

"I reckon I can trust you, Sandy."

I just nodded. He could trust me, all right. He did know that.

"If you'd like to drive the light truck, I can give you your choice between twenty-five dollars a trip between Greenport and New York or a flat hundred a week. You'd average between three and six trips a week, most of the time."

I did look at him then. "My God," I said, "there isn't that much money in the world!"

He smiled in his new quiet way and said, "Isn't there, though!"

OF COURSE I got it. I couldn't say anything more for a minute, and I remember I was beginning to think that I ought to be getting back to work or Jim would be wondering. Of course some customer was paying for my time. Finally I said, "See you after six, Harry; I can't talk now."

He nodded and walked off. I was really sparring for wind. At that I needn't have been so surprised. Of course I knew that a lot of things were going on and that somebody, a lot of somebodys, must be doing them. Why, Good Lord, you could walk into Wishart's meat market, just beyond the drug store, and buy all the Scotch and gin you wanted right over the counter! All old Wishart asked was to be sure you weren't one of the revenue men that he didn't happen to know. He thought nothing of delivering the stuff at the back door of the inn any time of day. And as for the village cop, Ben Hinchman, he got his for nothing over that same counter. We all knew that. . . . But it seemed to me, when I said that little thing, putting Harry off, that I was looking straight through him into his mother's eyes. Probably I oughtn't to have got sentimental that way. I'd always been willing enough to let the other fellow do his own business in his own way. It was nothing to me. But I couldn't help thinking about mothers a lot in those days. And I was beginning to think more than was good for me about one Jane Wood, too. And it was a softening kind of thing. I knew from the first that I wasn't going into it. Not that I felt like high-toning Harry in any moral way. I knew better than that. But it just wasn't my kind of thing, that's all. I had a neat little hand-colored picture in my mind of just what George Nelson would say if he found out I'd turned bootlegger. No, not for mine. I drew the line there.

So I just told Harry that night that I thanked him for thinking of me but guessed I wouldn't go into it.

"Why not?" said he. "You'd have plenty of protection. The revenue men'll never touch you. Not our crowd. And where would they get if they tried it? The strongest business men in most of the towns along the shore are either with us or buying from us."

"I guess I'm not keen on being shot up," said I.

"Who's to do the shooting. Ben Hinchman? I make a point of having one or two men along, and I won't say they're unarmed. But the revenue men won't shoot at us."

"How about hijackers?"

He shook his head. "Not along here. They work off the coast, or up on the Canadian border, where it's wilder and there aren't so many folks around. If it comes to that sort of thing, we'll have all the local cops with us. Don't you think you'd like to be in on it?"

"No," I said, "I don't, Harry. I just can't see it for myself."

"Well, all right, Sandy. I'm sorry."

"So am I, Harry. It's mighty good of you to think of me."

He took a house the second month, in November that was, on a side road a little way out of town. The impression was that he was renting from Amos J. Burlinghame . . . he was president of the Little River Bank and Trust Company . . . but it came out afterward that he'd bought it on a mortgage. There was a big barn back on the place, among the trees, that he used for a garage. He moved his mother in there and hired a girl to cook and do the housework. I went there to dinner the first night but felt kind of queer. She was so happy over the house.

ONE day he stopped by Jim's place with the big truck, and I noticed some boxes with the stencil of Wood and Watkins on them. It bothered me some. Though I didn't know why it should have. There wasn't any way they could be hooked up with the stuff Harry was running. I asked Wattie about it, just remarking offhand that I noticed they were shipping by truck now. She said oh, yes, that it was a good deal cheaper than the railway express. Well, why shouldn't it be? All Harry and his crowd wanted of regular merchandise was to use it for cover. Whatever they might charge for handling it would be velvet to them. And they hauled quite a lot of it at that, of honest merchandise, I mean. That was the way they worked. Harry said that the police down New York way sort of demanded it. It wasn't fair to them to carry the stuff so everybody could see it. They'd have to take action to save their face. It made things easier for them if you could show you were running a legitimate business. You see, he explained to me, some of the revenue agents kept coming in new to the job and had the idea they could make political capital out of strict enforcement of the law. Of course they couldn't get very far with it, because the whole tide of money and politics was dead set against them. And money settles everything. Harry didn't need to tell me that. I could see it as clear as day for myself.

Harry had done a surprising amount of thinking along these lines, politics and law and money and all. One night when he and I happened to be sitting in front of the garage he began talking more freely than I'd ever heard him before. "This man Coolidge says we ought to obey the law," said he. "Well, what law? There's millions of 'em mostly conflicting with each other. If the country started out to obey 'em all we'd turn the whole works into the biggest lunatic asylum the world has ever seen. The whole country'd be crazy within six weeks. Mr. Burlinghame says that law, real law, isn't just legislation, it's a crystallization of the public will." . . . I suppose he got all that line of talk from Mr. Burlinghame. . . . "Take the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act. A lot of folks wanted it. A lot of others didn't. We don't know yet just how the country really stands on it. There's millions of people that feel they have a right to drink their liquor in peace. Can you stop 'em? In the long run can you stop 'em? How about personal liberty? Whose business is it what a man does in his own house and with his private life? It isn't that kind of a country. Take the present situation. The Eighteenth Amendment is the law, isn't it? Well, what had it accomplished? What's the net of it? I'll tell you. It has killed off the revenue the Government used to draw from licensing the liquor trade and added it to everybody's income tax. It has put the price of liquor up five hundred per cent. The folks that pay the extra income tax have to pay all that extra money for their liquor besides. By removing the Government inspection and turning the whole business over to the bootleggers it has destroyed the standard of quality and set millions of poor devils everywhere to drinking poison. The cost of what they call enforcement has added hundreds of millions of dollars more to the income tax. And it has turned a big army of Government officials and police into the merriest gang of cheap little grafters we've ever had. And you can't blame them. They're just up against it. It's a mess.

Who's financing the rum-running? I'll tell you. The big money fellows, a lot of them, bankers and politicians and all. Who's buying the stuff? Everybody. Judges, senators, bankers, professors, business men, everybody. Don't forget about that nigger waiter that dropped a bottle of the stuff in the Senate rooms at Washington."

There was a lot more of it. He sat there, sober and decent-seeming enough, petting Roddy as he talked. He wanted to get on, make money. And he was in the way of it. I just listened. What could I say? Of course his mother would have seen it as a matter of principle. So would Aunt Ella. But you couldn't argue that very far. Not with practical men. It was old-fashioned. It was woman talk. Money does the talking. It does. Uncle Fred's sort succeed. And Al Bundy, too, he was a tremendous success. You couldn't possibly take it away from him. A pretty big man, when all was said and done. I was thinking about Ben himself, too. He was successful. And if you cornered him he would have justified everything he did. He could have pretty damn near proved to you that successful men in most every line of business were just as bad as he was. How about the big fellows that raid the stock markets and corner wheat? How about the chain stores that cut under a little fellow and run him out of business? How about the bankers that lend a fellow money until they can take his business away from him? That would have been his line of talk. He'd have bristled right up. Honest, the only argument I had was George Nelson. He was straight clean through. But where would you have to look for him? Managing a bush league team and pinching to pay off the mortgage on his home! . . . Jack Wilson, too. That was a different sort of case, but where was he? Jazz and the gay life had stolen his girl and killed him. The more I thought about it, the more like the very devil I felt. Where did I get off, myself? I might have been making upward of a hundred a week if I had just said the word, and be salting a lot down. Before long my money would have been chirping up a little in the big chorus.

WHERE was there something to hold on to in all this mix-up? Little River, even, didn't look so much like the peaceful, honest little village of real American folk it had seemed a month back. Of the people, that seemed like friends, the kind of folks you could tie to, I couldn't think of anybody but Mrs. Archibald and Jane Wood. No matter how much I told myself, it didn't do any good to be soft about things, my heart kind of ached for Mrs. Archibald. It would go pretty hard with her if she found out what was going on, and she might find out one of these days. And that little firm of Wood and Watkins didn't look any too solid to me. Somebody'd make just about two bites of those kids if they didn't watch out. I began to thinkI'd like to see Wood. It always did me good to talk with her and watch her laugh and wrinkle up her nose. So that evening I took Jim's old flivver and ran out there with Roddy. I'd worked out an arrangement to use the flivver for two dollars an evening. Jim drove a pretty good little roadster himself. I had a kind of uncomfortable feeling that things were going to begin to happen. I've said before something about the way it usually goes, one thing quick right after another. I don't know what it was, perhaps just the way Harry had opened up on me for the first time. I even felt a little superstitious about it. That's one thing you get from being around with ball players, superstition. If you don't believe it, sit in the dugout and watch what happens when the bat boy forgets and lays one of the bats crosswise on another. I found Watkins with her account books opened out on the table in the living-room and Wood washing the supper dishes. I put on an apron and wiped them for her and then helped put them on the shelves. I knew where everything went. Then I swept the kitchen, while she cleaned up the sink. It was fun. After that we sat in the living-room and talked. They were full of a big plunge they were making. A friend of Wattie's had arranged with one of the New York hotels to buy a lot of the ducks on trial and they were going to send a shipment in by Harry's truck two evenings later. That superstitious feeling was on me so strong by this time that I was tempted to urge them not to do it. But it seemed foolish, and of course I didn't say anything, but sat and listened. They were kind of excited about it and talked all over the place. It came down to a question of whether the commission people would stand for it. They had the big dream set in their minds that they might be able to break away and sell all their own stuff at a greater profit.

I didn't get out there the next evening, but stayed at the boarding-house, reading, in my room. I hadn't told them because I knew they'd kid the life out of me, but I had sent to New York and got a couple of books on poultry and duck raising. You see, the picture of those two little things trying to build up that business was in my mind all the time. I couldn't help being sort of drawn in. And I wanted to know a little something about it. Then the next day the first of the things I'd been dreading happened.

Broad daylight, too, about half-past four in the afternoon. Just a pleasant kind of lazy and sunny Indian summer day. Harry had come in from Greenport about three and then run out for the shipment of ducks. Then he came back to our place for gas. He didn't plan to start for the city until about eight or nine o'clock. His New York people liked to have him land there in the middle of the night. They had to be careful there because it wasn't possible to know all the revenue agents that kept turning up in the big town. Sometimes they brought in fresh gangs from some other city to make a showing. The truck stood by the road, under Harry's office, and near the side door of the drug store. Jim didn't like to have him park it on the garage property, and Harry was always careful about that.

I remember that I was working on a generator that I had taken out of a car, on a bench facing the one front window. Jim's office, a corner partitioned off the front there, was right at my elbow, making a jog, with a door opening into it just behind me. Then there was a front door from the office to the street.

I just happened to look up. A car was coming in past the garage toward the drug store, a new small five-passenger machine. I remember that the brakes squealed. Probably that's what made me look up. I noticed that two young fellows, strangers to me, were sitting in the front seat, and three others in the back, leaning forward. The one on my side held the door open a little way, as if he meant to jump out quick. I could see them pull in beside the truck before I lost my view of them. But two of the boys in the back jumped out while I could still see them and ran forward. I notice that I've spoken of them as boys. Well, they were. I'd put them anywhere between eighteen and twenty-two. The next minute I heard a shot. They didn't look so rough either. Well enough dressed they were.

Jim, when I turned back to look for him, was walking from the back of the shop toward the lathe, which stood around the corner of the office partition in the other jog. It's funny, when you think of it, but nowadays when you hear a shot in the street you don't think much of anything about it. The backfiring of a truck sounds almost exactly the same, and you get used to those sounds. I remember thinking that it probably wasn't anything at all, and there was no sense in making a fool of myself. Then I heard the roar of the truck motor starting.

But I spoke Jim's name, in a pretty guarded way, and he asked, "What is it, Sandy?" And right away I spoke out what I was thinking. I said, "It's highjackers after Harry." He said, "Oh, is it?" And went on to the lathe. I pushed Roddy on to the bench and stepped into the office and opened the front door. One of those boys was lying on the load, up high, where he must have climbed quick, his head hanging over the side and blood dripping from a hole in it. I figured out afterward that Harry must have shot him from his office window before he ran down-stairs. It just goes to show how quick on the trigger a quiet decent sort of fellow can get to be when he goes into that nervous business. Harry was smart enough. He knew better than he had let on to me what he was up against. He went in with his eyes open, and he was no coward. Another of them was holding the dead one on with his left hand and watching the door with a revolver in his right hand. The truck was just beginning to move when Harry appeared in the street door at the foot of the stairs that led up to his office. I don't think he even looked at that bird up on top, but fired at the one that was driving, and ran toward him. I saw the fellow on top of the truck, still pulling at the dead one to keep him from falling off, aim deliberately down at Harry as he ran.

I COULDN'T stand that. Jim kept an automatic in the desk drawer there in the office. And his shotgun stood in the corner. He was fond of going after ducks, and it was shooting season then. I realize that I thought and acted about as quick as I ever did anything in my life. I decided against the gun because it wouldn't likely be loaded, and anyway two shots mightn't be enough. I opened the desk drawer.

The automatic was in a pasteboard box, with a clip full of cartridges lying beside it. I stuck that in, slipped the guard with my thumb and jerked the barrel back as I jumped for the door. I could hear more shooting. Jim was just then coming into the office, but I don't think either I or he said anything. Not then. I stepped out and saw Harry lying on his face on the path just a few steps away from the door. That fellow must have got him with his first shot, and then just gone on pumping lead into him. He, this fellow up on top, was tying on the body that was up there with a rope-end. He had managed to haul it in from where it had been lying on the edge with the head hanging down over the tarpaulins in that weird way. Of course all this was going along faster than you'd think. In the second or two that I was making up my mind what I'd do, I noticed that the truck was rolling slowly in toward the telephone pole that stood there, and then I saw that fellow up top, after a quick knot in the rope he'd tied around that body, pick up his automatic and make a jump for the front end of the truck.

I was wondering what had become of the other two highjackers, the two that were in the front seat of the five-passenger. You see, they had pulled in close to the truck on the farther side, and were hidden from me. Evidently they figured on those two staying in the small car, leaving the other three to handle the truck. But one of those three was dead as the town pump. And from the way the truck was sliding down on the shoulder of the road toward the telephone pole, I judged that Harry must have got the driver with his first shot, before he went down himself. Just then . . . all this, remember in that second or two; you know how fast you can think sometimes when you really have to . . . I heard voices. One of those fellows in the small car was hollering something. The fellow up top had reached the roof over the driver's seat and had hold of it as if he meant to swing himself down into the seat. But he hesitated long enough to yell something back. I didn't catch what he said, but he was damning somebody or other. I was wondering where Rafferty could be. That was a fellow that Harry had working with him at that time, and usually he was right around when the truck stood there keeping an eye on it. But I couldn't see him anywhere around.

Then that fellow on the truck started to swing himself down. He wasn't looking at me at all. He was a little clumsy about it because he still had his automatic in his hand. Well, I plugged him. Clean. I fired a couple more times while he was falling but needn't have because he fell right down beside the front wheel in a heap, and the truck went on a few feet farther and came to a stop against the telephone pole.

It is rather queer, when I think of it now, but I don't think I had any particular feelings then. I was too busy. Even about Harry lying on the path there with his face in a pool of blood that was drying into the sand. What I seemed to want was to get those two in the five-passenger car. I ran out with the idea of coming around the head of the truck and getting them quick. I knew I had anyway three or four more cartridges in the clip. I remember hearing Jim's voice right at my shoulder saying, "I'm with you, Kid." But I heard a motor roaring, and the car went out with a rush on second speed. They'd got to the corner and were turning to the left on the state road before I came around the truck. The fellow that was sitting with the driver took a quick shot at me. I heard it zin-n-ck into the side of the drug-store. He couldn't shoot again for a second because the car was turning the wrong way for him, but he whirled around in his seat and fired once or twice more through the back window. Rafferty came running out of the meat market and fired several times at their tires, but missed. I realized then that a number of people were huddling in the doorway of the drug-store and some more in front of Wilder's store across the street. I saw Jo Dibble who worked there coming out in his white apron. And Walter Appleton who was cashier of the bank next door, directly opposite where the road turned, standing in the front window with the two girls who worked there.

It would be quite a while before Ben Hinchman could get around. His job was really more night watchman for the village than anything else, and he had to get his sleep in the daytime. I went back and found that Jim had laid down his shotgun and was turning Harry over very gently. He was gone all right. Nothing was left but to take him out to the cemetery. The fellow that had tried to drive the truck was lying across the seat moaning. We didn't pay any attention to him at first, we were too busy over Harry. By this time folks were running out of the stores and houses and crowding around in a solemn sort of hush. Jim called to the other boys that came out of the garage to get down the body that was lashed on the truck. Jo Dibble climbed up with them, still in his white apron, and helped. Another crowd took that wounded fellow into the drug-store.

JIM and I carried Harry into the garage and laid him out on one of the work benches. Doctor Kent came in then, with his little handbag. He was a tall man with bushy gray whiskers, an old-fashioned country doctor but a good scout. He didn't have to take much more than a look to decide he wasn't needed there. He knew what the trouble was all about, all right. Jim told him he'd better go into the drug-store and attend to the fellow that was still wounded.

Then Jim said to me, in a pretty husky voice, "Who's going to tell his mother, Sandy? Somebody's got to. I don't think their phone has been put in yet."

I thought that over. I hated the idea of some excited fool rushing out there and spilling it. And then I began to feel almost sorry that I was alive to face her. For a minute I stalled. Though it wasn't altogether stalling. This other thing just popped into my mind.

"Jim," I said, "Wood and Watkins have a shipment of ducks on that truck. I happen to know it means a lot to them. It's for a hotel in New York, and it may be the beginning of a new line of business. I'm going to take it off the truck right now, before any state police turn up."

"What'll you do with it?"

"Well," . . . I was thinking fast, but didn't know just how to put it . . . "well, Jim, if you could spare me I'd like to drive it in tonight. I could get back by noon tomorrow for sure."

He looked at me, and then just said, "Go ahead. Better just take the day." He turned back into the shop, and then turned and said, "Take the roadster."

"If there's room."

"There'll be room enough. You ought to be able to get a couple of boxes in behind. And you can pile the rest in front."

"All right, Jim. Just help me to get them off, and then I'll go over to Mrs. Archibald's."

We did that. There were only four cartons about the size of soap boxes. Then I kind of got my breath, after we'd carried the boxes into the office, and Jim looked at me again in that sober way and just said again, "Take the roadster, Sandy." And so I wiped my hands off with some waste and washed up as well as I could in a hurry, and drove out to see Mrs. Archibald. This was about five o'clock in the afternoon.

It was beginning to get dark. I started fast enough, Roddy hopping along into the car with me, of course, he always did that, and got out of the village without having to speak to anybody, but then without thinking much of what I was doing began to slow down. You see I didn't know what I was going to say or do. I could see her the way she had looked around the boarding-house almost as plainly as if she were somewhere there in front of me. When I got into the wood road, where there were trees around I pulled out to the side of the bushes and just sat there trying to think, but couldn't think at all. It occurred to me after a minute that somebody else might be coming along behind me, and that perhaps they might even have got there ahead of me, so I started up again. I felt awful. But it wasn't any good being a coward about it.

There weren't any cars in front of the house. I didn't delay any more, but told Roddy to watch the car and went right up to the door and knocked. There was a light on in the living-room. She let me in herself, smiling. And then she saw my face, and kind of caught her breath. I just stood there like a dumb idiot.

"What is it, Sandy?" she asked, very quiet. I wanted to put my arms around her, she was so little and sweet. Oh, I'm soft in spots, I am. Then she put her wrinkled little hand on my arm and asked, in a sort of whisper, "Is it Harry?"

I nodded. I couldn't talk even yet.

"He's hurt?" she said. "An accident?"

I nodded again. All at once I knew that she was in some way I wouldn't have thought about prepared for it, for part of it anyway. Every night when he was out on his run I suppose she thought about the danger of an accident happening and waited pretty anxiously until he got home. Probably she'd had a lot of sleepless nights, but she never showed it. Not to Harry, or any of us.

"Come in here, Sandy," she said, and walked into the living-room. I followed her. I noticed then that there was a big Bible lying on the center table. She went over by it and kind of looked at it for a minute. I couldn't help wondering then, and I've thought a lot about it since, that maybe after all these old folks had hold of something that we don't know so much about nowadays. Something they could believe in, I mean. Most of the folks I've been thrown with haven't seemed to believe in much of anything outside of themselves. And money, of course. At least, you can't help wondering.

After a little while she turned and came right up to me and put both her hands on me and looked right up into my face. Honest she was wonderful! She steadied me, and yet I was a pretty experienced and level-headed young fellow and she was nothing but a little old lady.

"Tell me, Sandy," she said.

"It was robbers," I explained. "Car thieves." One thing had cleared up in my mind during that minute or so when we weren't saying anything, and that was that a little lying wouldn't do any harm. "They tried to steal his truck. He went after them and they . . . shot him."

She hardly winced. Just waited a minute more. I could see that she was trying to grasp it. Then she asked.

"Is it . . . over, Sandy?"

I couldn't do a thing but bend my head.

"He was brave?"

"He was wonderful," I said.

She was crying now, but it didn't make any difference. I mean she seemed just as steady as she had before.

"Will you take me to him, Sandy?"

I said no. That didn't seem enough, so I said it again, "No. Better not."

"But they'll bring him here? I must have him."

"Yes. They'll bring him here."

I HEARD a car out in front and Roddy barked. Then there was a knock at the door, and I went there and let three women in that had driven out. One was Mrs. Parmalee, the minister's wife. She spoke to me and went right past me into the living-room. I was pretty glad to see her. She was the steady kind. The other two I barely knew by sight. They started to ask some questions in whispers. They seemed pretty excited. One of them had been crying. But just then I heard my name and went back into the living-room. Mrs. Archibald had sat down in a little straight chair. "Sandy," she said again, and reached up to me. I bent over, and she put her light little arms around my neck and I kissed her on the cheek. I didn't feel ashamed, either. I didn't care who saw me. Even if I was still in my grimy old overalls. I had forgotten about those. Then I drove back downtown. And on the way I met the undertaker's wagon driving out with all that was left of Harry. I had to pull out into the bushes to let them by.

When I got back to the garage Jim was standing in the door, and he said, "I've been thinking, Sandy, you'd better load up and get right out of here. Ben's nosing around, but he doesn't know anything. The state police are on the way, and they'll go into everything."

He helped me stow the four boxes in the roadster, back and front, and I hurried up and changed my clothes. He came back to my locker before I had finished and handed me a folded paper. "I did this," he said, "I found Harry's book in his pocket and tore out the carbon of his receipt to Wood and Watkins for the shipment. I saw there weren't serial numbers, and I tore it out clean. They needn't know anything about it. There isn't any record now, you see. We don't want to let those girls get mixed up in this —— bootleg business. I'll just tell the police when they ask for you that you had to make the trip to New York but that you'll be back tomorrow night."

I found my cap, and got into the roadster, and then Roddy crowded in on the seat between me and one of the boxes, and I drove out around the back street and took the Wading River road. I didn't tell Jim, but I had made up my mind that I oughtn't to go through with it without seeing the girls first.

There were lights in the house when I got there. I drove into the side yard and then chirped to Roddy and went into the house. I'll tell you, too, right here, that it was a comfort having that pup along, the way I felt. There wasn't anybody in the living-room, so I went on out to the kitchen. Wood was coming up the back steps with a pail, in her old knickerbockers and a sweater and her hair flying around her face. She said, "Hello, Sandy!" And I said, "Hello!" And then she took a look at me and asked, "What on earth is the matter?"

I decided right then that I'd better get hold of myself if I wasn't going to give myself away to everybody that saw me. But I still felt like the devil.

"Why, Sandy," said she, "you're shaking like a leaf!" And she ran over and got me a glass of water. I don't know just what good she thought it would do me, but I managed to drink a little of it. Then I said, "I'm sunk."

Watkins came running up the back steps then, calling out, "What on earth are our boxes doing in that car. And only two of them."

"The others are in the back," I said. "It's all right."

But Watkins was looking at me with those cool eyes of hers. "I don't know what's the matter with you," she said, "but I do know that a little brandy wouldn't do any harm."

I said no, thanks, but she ran right up-stairs.

Wood came over to me and rubbed some water on my forehead with her hand, and cried out, "Sandy! What on earth? What has happened?"

"Tell you in a minute," I said. And then Watkins came running down with some brandy, in the bottom of a big glass. "Drink it right down," she said. "Won't hurt you. It's the old stuff."

Well, I drank it. It was the first liquor I had ever tasted. I could feel it tingling hot inside me. Perhaps it was because my stomach wasn't hardened to it that it pulled me up so quick. In a couple of minutes I could feel myself steadying.

"There's been trouble in the village," I said, as soon as I could talk. "Car thieves. They got Harry Archibald trying to save his truck. I shot one of them. Killed him."

They looked at each other. Wood had horror in her eyes. But Watkins was cool.

"What do you mean they got Harry Archibald?" she asked, sharply. "You don't mean that they killed him?"

I nodded. She said, "Good God!"

Every minute I was feeling more like myself. I said, "Come on into the living-room. I want you girls to get this straight." And then when we had walked in there, Watkins asking questions and Wood still speechless, I went on with it. "Here's the whole thing, girls! Harry's been rum-running between Greenport and New York. He was only picking up merchandise like yours as cover."

"That's why his rates were so low," said Watkins.

"Yes. Now listen! The highjackers got after him this afternoon downtown. We killed three of them, but they got Harry. He's gone. The state police are coming. But I'm going to get these ducks to New York before I talk to them. They won't wait, those ducks. I'll be back tomorrow sometime. Don't talk at all. Here's the carbon of Harry's receipt. There's no record of the shipment. Nobody knows you made it. So you're out of it. And nobody knows I'm out here. I came out because I want you to know how it stands with your property and for another reason. Remember, it's an awful mess and you're well out of it. Stay out. And just don't say anything. Harry's mother doesn't know the whole truth yet, and we are going to keep it from her if we can."

"We won't talk," said Watkins. But Wood came right up and took hold of me and said, "You can't drive that car to New York tonight, Sandy."

I said, "Don't be silly, Woodie, of course I can. I was just a little shaken up."

Watkins remembered something she had to do and went back outdoors. Wood still had hold of me . . . she was always natural that way, never thinking about herself or what she was doing . . . and now she asked, looking right up at me. "What was the other reason, Sandy?"

I looked down at her. It gave me a funny feeling, our eyes meeting full-on like that. And then it came right out of me.

"Woodie," I said, "do you know who I am?"

And she answered, still looking right up into my eyes, "Yes."

TO BE CONTINUED.

She's an Automotive Engineer

[*Continued from page 68*]

going to be an engineer. I told my father. He said 'No' pretty emphatically! Very well, then. I wouldn't go to college. I stayed out of school for a year. By this time I realized that father was absolutely set against an engineering career for me so I listened to reason. The only other kind of work that appealed to me at all was physical education. Father was delighted, so the next fall I entered the Boston School of Physical Education.

"I was moderately interested in the work, but yet I was far from satisfied. It was the same feeling I used to have when I asked mother for chocolates and she gave me a wholesome stick of peppermint instead—a 'not that I love Cæsar less' sort of a feeling. I stuck it out for the winter and then spring came. Spring in Boston! And the smell of burning gasoline on Beacon Street! Never shall I forget it. It was that enticing odor that drove me finally into engineering. I couldn't resist it. I had to do it! If father wouldn't help me, I'd do it myself.

"I went back to my room one day that spring after a city walk, picked up a paper and looked over the 'Help Wanted' ads. One of them sounded promising. A woman was advertising for a younger woman to look after the grounds at her summer home. Next to engines I loved gardens best. I answered the ad and got the job.

"That summer was one of the best I've ever had. My employer, and she was soon my friend, too, was Mrs. Arthur Astor Carey, a friend of the Empress Eugénie who had gone with her into exile. She put me in charge of her 150-acre estate, 'Creek Farm,' at Portsmouth, N. H., and although it turned out to be a bigger job than I had anticipated when I answered the advertisement, I believe I did it to her satisfaction. I stayed on at Creek Farm late into the fall. I had no intention of going back to the Boston School. I had every intention of becoming an automotive engineer. The only question was how and where.

"By this time father realized how much what I wanted meant to me. Besides, he was sport enough to be downright proud of the protest I had made by going off on my own that summer. He admitted that since being an engineer meant so much to me he would withdraw his objections. So a technical college was possible at last. I looked around and discovered that for what I wanted—automotive engineering—I could get better training and get it in less time through practical experience than at any of the engineering colleges. So late in the fall of 1917 I left New England for Detroit to take the practical course at the Michigan State Automobile School there."

While it is true that even as recently as 1917 a good course in automotive engineering was hard to procure in any of our first class engineering colleges, there was another motive as well back of her decision not to take the time necessary for a degree in engineering. America had plunged into the World War and was getting farther and farther behind in its airplane program. Ethel Bailey wanted to do her bit where it would count most. There was no doubt in her mind but that she was innately qualified to help speed up the production of airplane engines. The Michigan State Automobile School offered just the practical course that she needed. She enrolled as a student there, took advantage of the opportunity to work both night and day and thereby cut several months off the time it would otherwise have taken her to complete their course. The girl came out equipped as an expert mechanic in the construction and repair of engines and engine parts.

THEN she enlisted in the Signal Corps and was assigned to duty in Detroit.

"At first they put me to work on thread gages. That was both interesting and important. But I had a hankering to be out on the field testing the engines. It was a bigger job but I knew I could do it. Eventually I told my chief so."

"And were told that the test field was no place for a woman," I suggested.

She looked at me in amazement.

"I was not!" came out emphatically.

"Oh, I didn't know women did that kind of work during the War," I apologized.

"They didn't," she answered. "At least I don't know of any woman who ever worked on the field testing engines. But that was no reason why they weren't glad to have me do it. You'll find that engineers—the real ones—have a pretty big way of looking at things. When I asked to be allowed to go out on the test field they tried out my ability and let me go to it! I've met that same broad-minded attitude ever since. It has always been ability that counted. Being a woman has neither helped nor hindered. Being able to do the work got me the job."

Almost at that very moment something happened that was going either to prove or disprove her statement. We were sitting at her desk in a small office in the Engineering Societies Building in New York City where for several years she has been Research Engineer for the Society of Automotive Engineers. The reception-room clerk opened the door.

"Mr. ——, a member of the Society, wants to talk with some one about bearing metals. I told him I'd ask you to speak with him and he said he didn't want to talk to a woman."

"I'll be right out," and the door closed again.

SHE turned to me; with her ready sense of humor of course she saw the joke.

"You think I've been lying to you, don't you?" she challenged. Then, "Take off your hat and coat, pick up a pencil and scratch pad and look as if you belonged here."

I did.

"Now come out and hunt for something in the magazines while I talk with Mr. ——."

We went out to the next room where I took a magazine from the racks and listened.

"I want to talk with some man," the interview started. Miss Bailey made some reply or other and then, in much less time than it takes to tell about it, those two were far over my head in an animated discussion of bearings, friction, ternary alloys—words that meant nothing in my life but which seemed touched with the spark of vitality as they used them. They were as interested as if they had been discussing politics! Part of what the man wanted to know she could tell him. She pointed out how he could get the other information. And finally she promised to send him some still unavailable data a little later. The question of talking with "some man" did not arise once she got started. He left, and I'd be willing to go on oath that he was satisfied!

"That's what I mean!" she said to me earnestly. "A technical man wants facts. Naturally he expects to get them from a man in an organization like this. But when he sees the facts coming that's all he is interested in."

It was just such an attitude of "Let's get at the facts," that took Miss Bailey from the test field at Detroit down to the Nordyke-Marmon Company's field at Indianapolis the last year of the War. For some unknown reason the engines turned out at that plant were failing in large numbers to meet the Army tests, and no one seemed to be finding out why. She was given an opportunity to go down to Indianapolis as an inspector to help unearth the difficulty. She chose to go.

Bert Dingley, famous race-track driver, who is now in charge of all service for Stutz Motors, was sent to Indianapolis to take charge of the field there a week after Miss Bailey's arrival. As his assistant she was put in charge of the test field office and the testing of the club propellers used to measure the efficiency of the famous Liberty-12 Engines. At first failure of engine after engine to meet the Army tests had to be reported. In order to stimulate production in all plants the Government had put on a Liberty Engine Building Contest and assigned to each plant its quota. The Nordyke-Marmon plant kept falling farther and farther behind. But Dingley and his crew were in earnest and soon they began to discover things—such as, for instance, that certain failures were directly due to the fact that the water they had been running through the engines during testing was too cold. Other facts came to light, and eventually it was apparent beyond the shadow of a doubt that the fault lay in the testing and not in the construction of the engines. Corrective measures were speedily applied and the Nordyke-Marmon plant began to get caught up with its quota.

Then they got into the running for the Government Contest. No need to stop here to record again the speed and tension of the War days; but it is worth noting that the time limit of that famous Contest expired in the midst of a virulent influenza epidemic in Indianapolis, and that the night that brought to the Nordyke-Marmon Company the title of Champion Liberty Engine Builders of America found Ethel Bailey finishing an unbroken 24-hour shift on duty where she was doing the work of several of the men who were down with the flu!

Bert Dingley brought official recognition of her loyalty and abilities in a tough job by appointing her official representative of the Government in charge of the test and inspection of the last Liberty Engine built at the Nordyke-Marmon plant.

And then the War was over. Likewise the career of many a war worker. But Ethel Bailey had just begun. Released from Army service she went back to Boston where she became the technical service representative for the Cadillac Company there. But the lure of aircraft had become greater than the lure of automobiles and after a few months she was down in Washington in the Bureau of Construction and Repairs, Aircraft Division, Navy Department, as assistant to Archibald Black.

One of the important pieces of work that came under Black's supervision in those days was the selection of materials in connection with aircraft design and construction. It was just at the time when plans for the Shenandoah were under way.

"My work on the Shenandoah," Miss Bailey told me, "was largely on fabric-bursting tests though I helped some, too, with testing on the transverse framework and with calculations of stresses.

"We knew in those days when the Shenandoah was still 'on paper' what the world realizes now, that it is still impossible to build an airship capable of withstanding all the elements when for some reason, as in a severe storm, they combine against it. An airship is a good bit like a human being. It can meet any number of difficult situations one or two at a time and come out with flying colors, but when a certain combination of emergencies arises it breaks under the strain.

"And right here is where I want to register the fact that engineering is one of the fields today where a so-called feminine point of view is much needed. While the technical man is just as human as any other man he is likely to become so interested in technicalities that he loses sight, at times, of the human element. I cannot understand why American women have been so slow to enter this field through which they could make themselves felt in helping to humanize the industrial world. Mechanical engineers are the people who design the machinery for this 'Machine Age' and it is more often designed for speed and production than for the health and comfort of the workers. Mining and metallurgical engineers have done wonders for efficiency in getting ores out of the earth and through the smelters, but little for the workers who help to create the wealth of the mining industry.

"'Efficiency' has been such a watchword in the profession that a whole group of engineers has arisen terming themselves efficiency engineers. Too often their idea is production—and then more production. The average woman will never look at business or industry in that way. Her instinctive urge to protect the race colors her viewpoint. The one American woman engineer I happen to know, Lilian Gilbreth of Montclair, N. J., has done more intelligently constructive work along the line of health and happiness for the worker than any other engineer I know.

"There's a field in engineering for women today that is practically untouched in this country, though girls are entering technical schools and colleges now in a way that is encouraging. I don't believe it will be so very long before it will be accepted, as not only entirely fitting but highly desirable that the daughter of an engineer should train herself to work with him in his business. I have known families where the daughter, instead of the sons, inherited the father's engineering trend of mind, but where his business will pass into the hands of a stranger eventually because it seemed better to make daughter into a school teacher or a milliner! It will be a great day for American family life and solidarity when a girl is free to train for her father's business no matter what it happens to be."

When that day comes the way will have been made a little easier because it happened to be Ethel Bailey who did part of the pioneering. She has held responsible engineering positions with the Army, the Navy, several automobile manufacturing concerns, the L. W. F. Engineering Company and one of the great national engineering societies. Certainly prejudice against women in engineering cannot exist very violently where she has once worked. Only recently the Society of Military Engineers made her one of its Engineer Members, an honor it may bestow upon civilians; and the American Association for the Advancement of Science elected her a Fellow under the ruling that "a Member who is professionally engaged in scientific work or who has advanced science by research may be elected a Fellow."

Both were honors unsought by her, and in the latter case an honor that usually comes, if it comes at all, a little later in life. They came in recognition of real merit. Scientific and technical societies of the highest order hold higher than college degrees the record of work done, of responsibility accepted and creditably discharged. In the old-fashioned way Ethel Bailey started out as a mechanic and made herself into an automotive engineer. Probably no other American girl has ever done it. Few men at thirty have surpassed her record. Her achievements have won for her the respect of her colleagues and the high honors of a profession which is still all but closed to women.

They Climbed Together

[*Continued from page 80*]

The Ackleys met sixteen years ago at the New York School of Fine and Applied Art. Floyd Ackley was studying interior decorating. A young girl, Edith Flack, of Greenport, Long Island, was studying portrait painting.

"The second day we met I proposed to her," said Mr. Ackley.

"He made me leave the portrait class and enroll for a course in costume design just so that I could be near him," put in Mrs. Ackley. "Of course I didn't learn a thing. We gadded about all that year."

Floyd Ackley was already earning his living by making jewelry. He used to work at this at night and study design during the day. Although born in New York, he had gone to Michigan to live as a child, gone to school at the Lewis Institute in Chicago and later studied painting at the Chicago Art Institute before he returned to New York.

"Jewelry is the only thing I never really studied," he explained whimsically. "A woman I knew in Chicago was experimenting with it. I worked with her for a time. First I tried making a ring for myself. After I had accomplished this, the next thing was to make something for my friends. Soon I found myself filling orders for friends of my friends. I became very much interested. So few people, you see, know what kind of jewelry they should wear. They rarely take their coloring or the shape of their hands into consideration. I became convinced that jewelry should be designed to express personality.

"I had no idea then that it was going to be my life work. I wanted to come to New York to study design. My father, however, didn't approve. I didn't tell him anything about my experiments in jewelry. I quietly saved the money that I had received for various pieces, came on to New York and then wrote him about it. With me I had brought along twenty-eight pieces to submit to the New York Society of Craftsmen for exhibition, thinking that they might take one or two, and that I could sell the rest. They took the whole lot! My potential income for weeks was thus tied up. So I had to drum up orders and work at night in order to be able to continue my course."

Mr. Ackley it appears soon became known at the school for his odd and effective slants in working out problems in design. He won a scholarship for a stage set in black and purple which represented figuratively a background for Paderewski in playing Chopin's funeral march.

Nevertheless, the longer he studied the more convinced he became that design and color were for him but the means toward gaining greater freedom and technique in the making of jewelry.

"Orders for my jewelry were coming in steadily, and so I decided to stick to it," he said. "It is surprising how many people want something individual. Commercial jewelers are sterotyped. One group of specialists makes designs; another cuts the stones; another does the settings. The result is cold, and there is a tendency for all such jewelry to look much alike. I believe that jewelry must be both designed and executed by the same craftsman if it is to express real life and beauty."

Notwithstanding the fact the success in such a new craft might seem to most people likely to be slow in coming, Floyd Ackley and Edith Flack married directly he finished his course, and gaily opened a studio in New York.

For nine years, until Telka was born, Mrs. Ackley worked with her husband. "I made all the chains for his necklaces," she said. "I loved the filling and engraving—the mechanical part that he dislikes. So we worked together very nicely. Before Telka was born I made up a stock of chains to last for some time. I have never worked at jewelry since."

Mr. Ackley works in silver, gold, copper and platinum in conjunction with precious and semi-precious stones. He builds up his pieces from the flat metal entirely by hand and carves out his designs. He often works in a combination of metals, a ring of gold and silver, a pin of gold and green gold. For people who habitually wear shades of brown he frequently makes up charming things in copper.

Though he often sets valuable gems for his customers, he likes particularly to work with semi-precious stones. "They are so rich in color," he told me. "And color and design are the things that count in jewelry. The idea that the stone must be more valuable than the setting is old-fashioned. I would just as soon make a hundred dollar setting for a four-dollar stone providing the stone has color and character. Of course if a person can afford several different pieces made up with precious stones, there's no reason why she shouldn't have them. The majority of people, however, have only one or two expensive jewels, and they wear these with any gown regardless of whether they are becoming with that particular dress. To my mind more and less expensive pieces chosen with thought as to the various types of costumes an individual wears are far more effective. Then the jewelry becomes a color accent. For instance, there's no point in wearing a diamond bar pinned up and down a dress. Jewelry should be a decoration—a blending into the whole, rather than an adornment, stuck on."

PEOPLE bring Mr. Ackley everything from a holly Christmas box containing seventy-two of grandmother's diamonds or nuggets from the gold rush of '49, to gold out of their teeth, spectacle bows, and baby's first tooth.

"The problem is to take the material they bring me and make it up in a good design," he explained.

Grandmother's seventy-two diamonds became a lacy brooch to wear with an evening dress. The nuggets became cuff-links. Baby's tooth became a stick-pin. The spectacle bows were melted up and appliquéd on the gold of mother's wedding-ring so that when the piece is finished the owner has a pendant which she proudly tells people was made from mother's wedding-ring and Uncle John's spectacles.

Mr. Ackley has more orders for rings than for other kinds of jewelry. "It's my opinion that the majority of people favor rings because they can wear them with almost any costume, also because unconsciously they like to admire their jewelry and they can look at their rings without going to a mirror.

"Men who order rings for themselves are much harder to suit than women. A man who wears a ring wears it month in and month out. Therefore it must not annoy him; it must not catch on anything, and it must not be too heavy.

If it hadn't been for Telka, Edith Ackley might still have been making the chains for the Ackley jewelry. When Telka was a year and a half Mrs. Ackley made her a doll—a queer, original doll of cream-colored Japanese crêpe, with embroidered face. From this doll developed the unique marionettes for which Edith Ackley is famous today.

It was such a funny doll that every one

laughed at it. The funniest thing about it was that it looked like some one the Ackleys knew. This gave Mrs. Ackley the idea of doing doll caricatures of well-known persons. Amused at the likenesses she obtained she made several, and just in a spirit of fun exhibited them in an art shop. Among these caricatures was one of Mrs. Zorach, an artist, one of a cigaret girl, a famous Greenwich Village character, and one of a prominent society woman. To Edith Ackley's amazement the dolls sold, and to her greater amazement people came to the studio to order more.

THEN she began to make what she called a flapper doll—a doll sixteen to eighteen inches long. "I didn't know how to dress the first of these," she said, "so I wound her with chiffon, then tied the chiffon around the ankle, and *she* sold!"

So many orders came in that Mrs. Ackley began to make dolls in earnest.

"I am the oldest of five children," she told me, "consequently I always knew how to sew. To make sure of this, however, my father insisted that if I went to Art School I should also take a course in dressmaking, so that I would have something practical to fall back on in case I needed it."

This knowledge plus the knowledge she acquired in Art School plus that acquired in the class in costume design—despite that assertion of hers that she learned nothing at all—went into the creation of long, bendy dolls with long, slim legs, long, slim arms, piquant, embroidered faces and gorgeous costumes. That winter she gave two exhibitions at the Arden galleries in New York and sent an exhibition out to Detroit.

Forthwith Mrs. Ackley's dolls were in demand, and this demand has not slackened. Every fall before the Christmas season she fills rush orders. She sells these dolls both wholesale and to individual customers. They have found markets all over the world from the cosmopolitan cities of Europe to remote Siam.

The spring following her first exhibition Mrs. Luther Gulick of the Gulick camp for girls at Lake Sebago, Maine, came to the studio. She had toured the country searching for a different sort of craft to teach to little children, and she asked Mrs. Ackley if she would come up to camp and give a course in doll-making. It did not even mean separation from her husband, for as it happened Mrs. Gulick had also heard of Mr. Ackley's work and wanted him to teach jewelry at the same time. Consequently for five summers the Ackleys have taught their respective crafts at the Gulick camp.

The first summer Mrs. Ackley taught her girls to make the characters for a circus. When Mrs. Gulick asked her to come back the following year, Edith Ackley said to her husband: "But what can I do? I don't want to do the same sort of thing over again."

"Why don't you try marionettes?" he asked her.

She demurred. She didn't know anything about them, she said. Encouraged by her husband, however, when she got back to New York she began to experiment. And the next summer she returned to camp to teach marionettes.

When she returned to town after her first summer of marionettes she was asked to exhibit at the Arden Galleries. "I had only the two marionettes that I made as an experiment," she said, "but I did not say so. I hurried home and made up a set of characters for a play I had in mind. In the meantime Floyd made me a marionette stage, and I gave a paid performance for my first public appearance."

Since this first performance four years ago Edith Flack Ackley has become an authority on marionettes. Her performances have as great an appeal for grown-ups as for children and are requested particularly for tea dances, house parties and club functions. As the result of her recent success in the Provincetown Playhouse she is booked for a series of performances at other New York theaters for the coming season.

Mrs. Ackley not only makes her marionettes, she designs and makes all her costumes and stage sets, and she creates all her plays. Mr. Ackley is chief adviser on sets and lighting, and he and Telka sit in critic's row at dress rehearsals on the studio stage. In addition to this studio stage he has made Mrs. Ackley two portable ones. One fits into a steamer trunk and can be transported by express. The other fits into a thin, flat metal case which Mrs. Ackley takes with her in a taxi.

For the most part she spins her plays from the threads of fairy tale and fancy. "I find that both grown-ups and children want magic in a marionette play," she said. "Most people want to make marionettes duplicate things that people do. Some manipulators even make them breathe, or make them smoke cigarets. I am not interested in this mechanical simulation of realism. To me marionettes are little people in a world of their own. It is a world of fancy and of disembodied personalities, and its little people can do many things that humans can not do. A marionette is unhampered by the force of gravity. She can ride on a magic carpet, or she can do a dance impossible for a human to accomplish. My ballet dancer, for instance, leaves the floor and floats through the air! I believe in making the most of the qualities marionettes possess.

Mrs. Ackley attributes the effect she gains with her dancing dolls to the even, natural movements with which she manipulates their strings. It has been her observation that most people who do marionettes are apt to exaggerate their motions. "They seem to think that just because they are on a string, they must jerk them," she says.

Cooperation with the Ackleys is not confined to their professions. They carry it into their domestic tasks and into their sports.

They both cook! Indeed they are famous for their recipes.

The Ackleys' sport is cruising in a sailing canoe. Mr. Ackley cruised as a child on Lake Michigan. Mrs. Ackley's childhood was spent mostly on Peconic Bay. Since their marriage the Ackleys have cruised for entire summers both on salt and fresh water. One of the attractions of the Gulick camp on Lake Sebago is their trim sailing canoe.

"We thought we would have to give up sailing for a while after Telka came," said Mrs. Ackley. "But we just took her with us. On many a cruise in open water I've bailed the boat with one hand and held on to Telka with the other. People are furious with us for taking Telka into danger, as they call it. Floyd always answers them, 'Well, we'd rather have her an angel than an orphan.'"

He Paints the Midnight Skies

[*Continued from page 87*]

first signs in Manhattan were painted on the roofs and chimneys along the lines of the elevated. Gradually his artistic efforts became centralized along Broadway, and the 'poster men' were disturbed because a 'paint man' had become the dominating advertising factor on America's most famous thoroughfare.

"But the 'paint man' was soon to use sparkling colored lights as well as oil.

"One spring evening more than a quarter of a century ago New Yorkers were treated to a new nocturnal spectacle. What is known as the world's first electric sign, reading 'Manhattan Beach, Swept by Ocean Breezes,' flashed forth in electric lamps from a blank wall south of Madison Square.

"The story runs that one evening H. J. Heinz, the Pittsburgh pickle man, from a room in the Fifth Avenue Hotel across the way, saw the display. Heinz, like some watcher of the skies 'when a new comet swims within his ken,' gazed upon the spectacle 'with wild surmise'—and conceived a grandiose dream of pickle advertising in electric lights.

"The next day he got in touch with O. J. Gude, impresario of Broadway advertising, and between them they contrived the now historic 'pickle sign.' Soon the slogan '57 Varieties' flashed in electric lights above the theater crowds of Madison Square. That was the first elaborate attempt at advertising in moving colored lights. It was a mere 'blinker,' hand-operated by an electrician who sat perched up in the framework and nearly went crazy throwing the switches back and forth all evening. That sign, however, not only helped make Heinz's pickles famous throught the world but really gave birth to the luminous kaleidoscope of modern Broadway.

In 1918, when Gude was quite an elderly man, he decided to sell out his manifold outdoor advertising interests, and retire with a few millions, to live at ease abroad. Once again Mr. Fulton, by that time standing in Barney Link's shoes, showed his financial genius by securing the capital to purchase the Gude company's interests.

And next, a year later, the organization of Thomas Cusack, the Chicago advertising man, became linked with that of Fulton. Thus another American industry, following the familiar trend of recent years, had passed from the veteran hands that first wielded the actual implements of the trade. The men of paint and paste brush had given way to the financier, the salesman and the organizer.

Kerwin Fulton is those three things in one.

Moreover, to his job as leader of the outdoor advertisers' association he brings an interesting conception of the psychology of poster advertising.

"It lies fundamentally," he told me, "in the subconscious effect of pictorial suggestion. On the printed page an advertiser can impress you, if he wishes, with a long message about his product. But with his posters he must sink his message deep into your subconscious mind with just a few words in large letters—and with a picture. The suggestive power of the picture itself becomes the dominating influence of his advertisement.

"There is a hypnotic power in all this newer school of advertising, but it is beneficent hypnotism in so far as the advertised products actually do perform the service they claim. For only those which *do* can attain a strong enough economic position to be able to afford national advertising in any medium. So it is on this principle of subconscious suggestion that the most successful contemporary use of poster advertising is built.

"I remember the spectacular campaign with which a certain new chewing gum was once launched in the West. A brilliant red coach with scarlet-costumed footmen was pulled through the streets by a team of red-blanketed horses, while a girl, also in scarlet, distributed free samples. Here was a typical exploit of the older school of outdoor publicity. It succeeded in compelling popular attention, but did little more, and the gum was finally put over by the supplementary use of modern advertising psychology. Generally speaking, outdoor advertising started in this sensational attention-grasping way. Sir Thomas Lipton, for instance, many years ago, is said to have laid the foundation of his fortune with placards of enormous porkers on blank walls in London. This was when he was importing pigs from Ireland. These advertisements, effective as they were, had only the prime requisite of attention value. Nowadays, in every big advertising campaign, the old idea of mere sensation is passing and the new science of artistic suggestion is coming into its own.

"And therein lies the best guarantee of the permanence of the improvement in outdoor advertising art on which we are now working. To have the glamour and charm that make for the desired subconscious effect every poster must be as beautiful and artistic a pictorial handling of our subject as we can achieve.

"From the great flashing spectacular signs of Broadway down to the simplest poster panel on a village street corner the effect of large scale outdoor advertising is to associate a product in the observer's mind with a certain richness and glamour which he craves in his own life. This pictorial suggestion somehow seems to connect his own aspirations with the product which the advertiser offers for his service.

"There is little danger of poster advertising ever subsiding to the crude standards of other years. On the contrary, its artistic merits will be emphasized with time. The day is coming when the poster panel as a by-product of its advertising function will carry into every town and hamlet the highest forms of modern commercial art. The poster panel can be a definite artistic influence in American life. It can bring graphic beauty to millions. Evolution will make of the billboards—which were once ugly objects of derision—truly beautiful examples of the work of great artists. They can in effect turn every business street where they are shown into a new variety of art gallery, having power to cultivate intensively the public's appreciation of graphic art."

The Fight

[*Continued from page 109*]

Jersey City. Boys in Jersey City were apparently schooled curiously. Upon the onslaught of Jimmie, the stranger had gone wild with rage—boylike. Some spark had touched his fighting-blood, and in a moment he was a cornered, desperate, fire-eyed little man. He began to swing his arms, to revolve them so swiftly that one might have considered him a small, working model of an extra-fine patented windmill which was caught in a gale. For a moment this defense surprised Jimmie more than it damaged him, but two moments later a small, knotting fist caught him squarely in the eye, and with a shriek he went down in defeat. He lay on the ground so stunned that he could not even cry; but if he had been able to cry, he would have cried over his prestige—or something—not over his eye.

There was a dreadful tumult. The boys cast glances of amazement and terror upon the victor, and thronged upon the beaten Jimmie Trescott. It was a moment of excitement so intense that one cannot say what happened. Never before had Whilomville seen such a thing—not the little tots. They were aghast, dumfounded, and they glanced often over their shoulders at the new boy, who stood alone, his clinched fists at his side, his face crimson, his lips still working with the fury of battle.

But there was another surprise for Whilomville. It might have seen that the little victor was silently debating against an impulse.

But the impulse won, for the lone lad from Jersey City suddenly wheeled, sprang like a demon, and struck another boy.

A curtain should be drawn before this deed. A knowledge of it is really too much for the heart to bear. The other boy was Willie Dalzel. The lone lad from Jersey City had smitten him full sore.

There is little to say of it. It must have been that a feeling worked gradually to the top of the little stranger's wrath that Jimmie Trescott had been a mere tool that the front and center of his persecutors had been Willie Dalzel, and being rendered temporarily lawless by his fighting-blood, he raised his hand and smote for revenge.

Willie Dalzel had been in the middle of a vandal's cry, which screeched out over the voices of everybody. The new boy's fist cut it in half, so to say. And then rose the howl of an amazed and terrorized walrus.

One wishes to draw a second curtain. Without discussion or inquiry or brief retort, Willie Dalzel ran away. He ran like a hare straight for home, this redoubtable chieftain. Following him at a heavy and slow pace ran the impassioned new boy. The scene was long remembered.

Willie Dalzel was no coward; he had been panic-stricken into running away from a new thing. He ran as a man might run from the sudden appearance of a vampire or a ghoul or a gorilla. This was no time for academics—he ran.

Jimmie slowly gathered himself and came to his feet. "Where's Willie?" said he, first of all. The crowd sniggered. "Where's Willie?" said Jimmie again.

"Why, he licked him *too!*" answered a boy suddenly.

"He did?" said Jimmie. He sat weakly down on the roadway. "He did?" After allowing a moment for the fact to sink into him, he looked up at the crowd with his one good eye and his one bunged eye, and smiled cheerfully.

The Flea Barnum of America

[*Continued from page 120*]

made his permanant home, and where he breeds a California variety of flea called the Human Flea (Pulex irritans) which he trains for his inimitable circus. (California papers please copy.)

Thus we see that to John C. Ruhl belongs a most unusual heritage of training and exhibiting fleas. He explains that the process of training them is a most tedious and painstaking affair from the moment he starts them on their circus career at the tender age of two weeks. He makes no bones about explaining his training process, for he feels confident after long years in the business that no one else would have the patience to profit by his revelations. So in publishing his training process one is giving away no confidences.

Ruhl uses Human Fleas exclusively. They are common in all European countries, but are found in the United States only in warm and sandy districts such as are found in California. This species of insect viewed under the microscope reveals physical equipment similar to that of the grasshopper. Its hind legs are made for jumping instead of walking. That is why the normal flea whether being pursued or in pursuit is always seen in the act of leaping or jumping as a means of locomotion. Consequently, the first thing Mr. Ruhl must do is to break them of the jumping habit, and teach them to walk.

A very fine little gold chain is placed around the neck of the insect. It suspends the flea upon a little white paper platform with its feet touching. Mr. Ruhl claims a flea has high-powered instinctive, and reasoning powers. Because of this it will invariably jump off a white object, and on to a dark one so that it may hide. The insect immediately tries to jump from the white paper platform. But the little fine gold chain is heavy . . . soon the flea tires of trying to lift the chain. Gradually the idea seems to dawn on the insect that it must work out a new system. Presto! it begins to walk, or crawl.

The flea is now ready to be trained. A longer gold wire is placed around its neck to be used by the trainer as a sort of handle. The placing of this wire around the tiny neck much after the fashion of a necktie is the job that baffles every one but John C. Ruhl. If the wire is drawn too tightly the flea is strangled. If the wire is too loose the flea escapes! Ruhl performs this trick instinctively. It is a gift of inheritance.

Remember that each flea can be taught only one trick. If the insect is destined to be a dancer in the Big Show it must be taught the dizzy gyrations of jazz. Mr. Ruhl places it in a tiny ring. Impeded by the wire, and having been broken of the jumping habit, the flea tries to get out of the ring by following its circular sides around and around. In doing this the insect attains a vibratory motion and movement. When it is finally placed upon the platform, attired in what is alleged to be a hoop-skirt of 1860 vintage, the flea goes through the gestures of dancing to jazz music. Mr. Ruhl has one flea named Tom that dances the Charleston better than most people can! The only thing he does not do is to shout: "Hey, hey!"

Pat, the so-called Irish flea in Mr. Ruhl's collection, puts on the strong-man act. He is hitched to a tiny merry-go-round, five thousand times his own weight, and he gives a great exhibition of the only one-flea-power carousel in the world! Scientists are still marveling (or at any rate they ought to be) over the herculean physical powers of these little insects. It has been figured out that if a man weighing one hundred and fifty pounds had the proportionate power of one flea, he could carry away two hundred and seventy-five tons on his shoulders.

But the flea that leaps through the hoop at command is the real head-liner of this all-star troupe. I believe his name is Jerry the Jumper. He has not been trained to walk exclusively. When Jerry comes out Ruhl commands him to sit down. From where I stood the flea seemed to be sitting down all right.

"Jump, Jerry!" commands the trainer. Believe it or not the flea takes off and does a clean hurdle off the lower rim of said hoop. Spectators unduly nervous at the length of these jumps are soothingly reminded by Mr. Ruhl that his fleas positively will not desert the show.

Yes, there is a juggling act also. Perhaps you will think the juggling flea smartest and most amazing of all. He is placed on his back, and juggles a white cotton ball weighing twenty-five times his own weight. And just a minute! When ordered to do so he tossed this ball back into a little blue box by a swift motion of his feet.

This flea Barnum is about forty-nine years old now, but he looks only forty. The fleas

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keep him young and active, just as they have so many other people, though in a slightly different sense. John has made money out of the business, and it interests him as much as an occupation as it does as a money-making proposition.

The afternoon I witnessed this remarkable exhibition Ruhl had received from California by air-mail a shipment of one hundred and fifty fleas which he expects to put into training shortly. Each one is destined to be a Union Flea because John lets them work only every other day. Please bear in mind that the life of a trained flea is only about ten months. Consequently the trainer must always be on the teaching job. . . . I have neglected to say so far that the whole performance of the Flea Circus is visible to the naked eye, taking place in a ring about four feet square. And, in conclusion, let me remind you that the mind believes what the eye can see!

—T. HOWARD KELLY.

They Live on Chrysanthemums

[*Continued from page 122*]

wish came true. Today his Mistress Henry Robinson stands six feet tall and measures seven inches in diameter. Next to them in popularity come the large, curly-headed Turners and the yellow Kings of Italy.

You would think if you walked along the Cheatham estate in late September that they were preparing for a political rally. But it is only the chrysanthemums getting ready for their last few weeks' spurt before November 1. Great canvas covered frames cover the chrysanthemums almost as far as you can see. Under these frames, Mr. Cheatham and his family are continually weeding, pruning, watering and tying. Then—when the last of the great flowers have been borne away by retail florists on the morning of November 2, half the old stalk is cut to the ground and the other half left standing.

After Christmas everything above ground is again taken off. Late in March, when the plants are a few inches high, they are stripped of their leaves, put in a hot bed of sandy soil and covered for a week. Early in April they are transplanted to the field, where they remain until their maturity.

"More trouble than babies, I always say," comments Mr. Cheatham fondly. He goes on to explain how the strongest shoots are then selected, and the others cut off. This "cutting back" process must be repeated from three to five times.

The real work on the chrysanthemums begins June 15, when they are tied back to their frames, a process that is repeated six times. This, with watering, fertilizing and cutting, takes the Cheatham family about fifteen hours a day. Nor is this the half of it. The ground has to be well drained, and digging the ditches which surround a bed is no child's job. "Blind buds" appear about the middle of July and show whether a chrysanthemum needs to be retarded or hastened to be ready at the allotted time. Diseases have to be watched for, since chrysanthemums are as susceptible to sickness as human beings. Mr. Cheatham has studied chemistry as human parents study food. He knows every peculiarity of the soil chrysanthemums need. It must be free from acids and contain nitrogen and potash in the right quantities, and it must not have too much ammonia.

"Then green-fly!" sighs Mr. Cheatham, lifting his hands in horror, and the children chime in "And lice and grasshoppers and mealy bugs and thrips, we have to spray for them all the time don't we, Dad?"

They tell you how for weeks beforehand they get up at night to watch the sky and scan the weather reports. Some rain is desirable, but too much will carry the fertilizer beneath the roots. Some sun is welcome, but too much will force the flowers ahead of time. The long hot Louisiana summers, extending far into the fall are commendable, but just before All Saints Day there should be a cold snap to give the chrysanthemums their glossy finish.

Mr. Cheatham contracts to sell to florists when he first sets out his plants each year, and they tell him the size of the beds they want. This year his crop of forty thousand flowers is being raised in three beds—one 100 x 248 feet, another 115 x 65 feet, and the other 27 x 100 feet—a little over an acre all told.

Left to themselves chrysanthemums would literally blossom like the rose with a number of flowers on each stem. But like precocious children, they must be held back so that all their strength will go to the one or two giant blossoms.

"Yes, they're as much trouble as a lot of children," admits Mr. Cheatham as his eyes stray to seventeen-year-old Clarence, the two little boys and twelve-months-old Elmer, "but like children, they're worth it."

Of course raising chrysanthemums might not be so lucrative a profession in other parts of the country where there is not the tremendous demand. On October 31 in New Orleans, the great shaggy flowers sometimes sell for as high as five dollars apiece. But the rest of the year in a semi-tropical climate they are easily supplanted by roses and camelias and lilies and jessamine and myrtle.

"Yet they tell me chrysanthemums are very

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ALFONSO GOMEZ IZQUIERDO, San Francisco, Calif.

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YEAST

THIS FAMOUS FOOD tones up the entire system—aids digestion—clears the skin—banishes constipation.

popular for football games in the North," says Mr. Cheatham, "and even down here many people like them for Thanksgiving."

He admits that a florist's trade has its uncertainties, but then what hasn't? It is dependent on the weather and the wind. On the other hand, it has an almost certain market, since, unlike mah jong or cross-word puzzles, it is founded on one of the most enduring of human traits—the love of flowers.

"Having another trade in the offing is a great help," says Mr. Cheatham. "Thanks to my experience as a machinist, I have built my own pipe lines and my own spraying system. I have made my own tractor too, out of the model of an old racing car. It can do more work in five hours than a man with a hoe can do in two weeks."

What other hobby—if you can call an activity that nets you five thousand dollars a year a hobby—also provides you with wholesome food and enormous quantities of fresh air? Freed from the machine shop and the time clock, Jim Cheatham can watch his children grow strong and rosy-cheeked on home-grown vegetables and home-grown milk. All around them, as far as the eye can see, stretch the vast fertile plains of Louisiana, as flat as the back of your hand, but with a charm that is all their own. Above them roll the great clouds from the Gulf across fields of rice and sugar cane and magnolia and palmetto.

"It's a great country for chrysanthemums and children," says Mr. Cheatham, "they always grow well together."

—BEATRICE WASHBURN.

The Rattlesnake Lady of Minnesota

[*Continued from page 121*]

entomology department of the University of Kansas, where she had formerly been a science student. While she was there she learned that the university was very anxious to get some live diamond-back rattlers for scientific research. Her feeling toward snakes up to that time, she says, had been the usual one. She had never touched one and she was hardly able to look at one. But just the same, the idea of including some snakes in the bug shipments she was sending back to Kansas would not down.

So she got a snake stick six or seven feet long (the one she uses now is a handy little thing of thirty inches) and went out to see what could be done. Every time she stepped on a stick, or a pebble moved, she jumped. Snake hunting of this sort was not dangerous, but neither was it remunerative. One day, not altogether voluntarily, one imagines as she tells the story, she found herself in the middle of a snake den. There were thirty or forty rattlers, all "throwing it into high" to get out of sight.

Mrs. Wiley was literally "scared stiff." She couldn't move and she didn't. And then, the power of observation gradually returning, she noticed that when she stood still, so did the snakes. And with that observation, came the sudden realization, the insight into snake character, if you will, that has made it possible for her to study and handle without fear the deadliest snake in America. This sudden realization was that the snake has no aggressive malice, that he strikes only when cornered or frightened. After that, she and the snakes were at one, not actually yet perhaps, for it was some time before she began to handle them, but potentially.

Three years ago Mrs. Wiley was asked to become curator of the Minnesota Academy of Natural Sciences and accepted the position. It has its quarters on the top floor of the Minneapolis Public Library, and no one else would suspect for a minute that the place offered quarters for even a miniature zoo. But Mrs. Wiley just naturally amasses live things as some collect antiques. On a perch on the floor sits a great horned owl, giving his "huh-huh" of recognition whenever he hears her voice, but otherwise gazing with unblinking eyes into the future. In a comfortably warm box near the radiator are a pair of fat Gila monsters, and a small glass tank holds a collection of baby alligators and greedy mud turtles. She had the rattlers shipped in to her from Texas, and it was the necessity of feeding them when they refused to eat that taught her to handle them. "They had to be fed," she says, "so I had to do it, for nobody else wanted to." One can understand without the least difficulty how this might be so.

Every schoolboy in town knows "the snake lady," and the things they bring her are enough to explain "why mothers turn gray." All the ailing beloved pets, that have made no hit in the family circle, toads and frogs and lizards, are brought in for her inspection. Stripey and Flipsey, for instance, were gifts of admirers.

There is a tap at her door and three anxious eyed boys hand in a cigar box. Lifting its cover reveals an emaciated baby alligator, six or seven inches long. "He's from Simmons School," the boys explain. "We've had him four or five months and nobody's ever seen him eat." "Oh, you poor little thing," says Mrs. Wiley as she lifts him up. And five minutes later he has had his obdurate jaws opened with a hairpin, a sliver of raw beef

Ever notice?

SOONER OR LATER most men reach a point, in everyday matters at least, where price is no longer all-important. They begin to look around for "something better." And it is by no means an accident that just at this point so many men turn to Fatima

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pushed gently down his throat, and is swimming about in a tank with half a dozen of his kind. Good company, apparently, briskens up even an alligator, for he shows remarkable spirit all of a sudden. "We will have to forcibly feed him for two weeks," Mrs. Wiley tells the boys, "and if he lives that long, he will be all right, and you can have him back later."

In their case near by, Jimmy and Jane, the Gila monsters, sit up and take notice when the alligators are fed. While Mrs. Wiley holds them, the children are allowed to touch their skin which "feels just like a beaded bag," and do so with delicious little shivers of bravery. Mrs. Wiley explains that "they are poisonous only to the small creatures they live on."

Mrs. Wiley was godmother to the only rattlesnakes ever born in captivity. They were born a little over a year ago, and scientific magazines chronicled the fact with interest. For it had previously been supposed that snakes were too timid and nervous to reproduce except in their native state. Ethel was their mother, and Stanley their father. The parent snakes had been under Mrs. Wiley's care for two years when the little ones were born. It may be noted in passing that Ethel, with modern flapperish tendencies, showed little interest in her offspring, but Stanley followed them about, butted them with his head, and otherwise displayed a paternal and proprietary interest in them.

There were eleven little snakes born, and eight lived. The eight, at the age of seven months, when they had grown to be a foot long, met a tragic fate, martyrs to science. A moving-picture man came to take their pictures, and in the excitement that followed their box was left on a hot radiator.

Besides losing her friends, Mrs. Wiley felt the death of these young rattlers as a distinct loss in another way. For, born in captivity and unusually tame, she had hoped to use them for scientific research in an effort to determine the use of the "pit" found in snakes just below the nostril and toward the eye.

The snake, Mrs. Wiley believes, is misunderstood. As with the mushroom, the good snake suffers from the bad. For every poisonous snake there are a hundred that are harmless, and many of these are the farmer's very good friends. Why should so much misinformation, she asks, be spread abroad about snakes? The time has come for more accurate information and less hearsay superstition about this branch of the animal kingdom.

"Fear of snakes," says Mrs. Wiley, "is quite natural until one has learned to distinguish between the poisonous and the non-poisonous ones and has acquired some authentic information about them. But this fear is not innate. It is due to traditional prejudice warped into the minds of the people down through the ages. The snake was chosen as the symbol of evil—some animal had to be so chosen. But it is foolish for us still to entertain a dislike of these little creatures because of ancient superstition. I have talked to thousands of people here in the museum about snakes and have yet to meet a person really knowing anything about them who dislikes snakes. It is the misinformed and the prejudiced who have such a deadly hatred of them.

Explaining her making pets of the rattlesnakes, Mrs. Wiley says:

"I believe in kindness to animals, and when we obtained the Texas rattlers for the museum I was determined that they should never be mistreated or teased, but should have the same careful attention as is bestowed on other animals. I had a great desire to know how they would react to kind treatment as compared with other animals. The results can easily be seen—perfectly contented creatures and the first family of captive-bred rattlesnakes. I believe that most poisonous snakes can be successfully tamed the same way. Of course they are not the kind of pets for children or average grown-ups, for the reason that they are exceedingly nervous and highly excitable."

Mrs. Wiley is not the only one to advocate a more reasonable attitude toward snakes. About a year ago the Boy Scouts established a merit badge for excellence in the study of reptiles. Since then hundreds of boys all over America have been getting familiar with the nation's reptile population. Mrs. Wiley is examiner in the Minneapolis district, and any morning after school half a dozen boys may be found gathered round her, listening, asking questions, learning through actual examination of live snakes. Recently the first group received their badges. Mrs. Wiley feels that with this going on all over the country, it is only a question of a year, or at most two or three years, until the unreasoning prejudice against snakes will begin to die out and in its place will come a better understanding of them and of their very important place in the scheme of life.—GRACE POLK.

"Mail Pouch" the College Hobo

[*Continued from page 119*]

the East and Middle West in the milder season of the year—this is the informal itinerary which "Mail Pouch" follows in his business.

His favorite colleges are Illinois, Michigan, Yale, Cornell, Carnegie, California, Northern Oklahoma, Texas, Purdue, Miami, Oberlin,

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All my life I've found that the best usually turns out actually to be the cheapest. I mean that literally—in the dollars and cents meaning of the word.

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Use all the water you can—hot or cold, hard or soft—that little sliver of cream will hold plenty. Lathers up into a big mountainous bank which *positively won't dry on your face* and which reduces the stiffest, wiriest whiskers to abject surrender in just about record time.

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Wisconsin, Toronto, McGill, Washington and Jefferson, Pittsburgh and West Virginia.

There is more pep in a big college than in a little one, "Mail Pouch" believes, but more in a school in a small town than in a large city.

"In a small boig dere ain't much to do and de students have to figure out deir fun. In a city everyt'ing is dere for dem to play wit' and dey don't have to figure out deir amusements at all. City schools is all right but dey oughta have nuttin' but graduate students, see."

"Mail Pouch" defends the colleges from their lay critics. He believes a great many people like to take issue with the colleges from the standpoint of morals or behavior.

"I get into all of dese here schools," he explains, "and all de fellows and goils is pretty decent. Take a town as big as any ordinary univoisity. You know dere's lots of off-color stuff going on dere because de papers tell you so. You never t'ink about dat, do yu? But take somethin' outa de way in any college. Don't dey start a scandal about it? I'll tell de woild dey do.

"Take me woid fer it, de average run o' college students ain't tough. Dey ain't snobbish neider.

"Any one who wants to can git tru a univoisity or college dese days," declares "Mail Pouch." "But t'ings was mighty diff'runt in my day. Yu wasn't educated den until yu went over to Europe and loined all dem foreigners had fer yu. Now dem fellows come over here to loin from us. De poor boy gits a chanct along wit' de rich ones. I know one school, dat's Oberlin, where lots of de rich boys woik just so folks'll t'ink more of dem." This remark, needless to say, was made in Oberlin.

"If I was a poor boy, I'd pick me out a school clost to home an' git me a job. Southern boys wit' money go East to school but de poor ones stick in de Sout'. Our schools is good but dey ain't got over one old-fashioned idea. Dey oughta pay deir teachers better. Boy, dose fellas oin deir checks and den some. I can't see why some of dese here millionaires don't loosen up a little and help out."

A small college occupies "Mail Pouch's" attention about four or five days. A State school claims a week of his time. At Illinois and Michigan he usually spends four or five weeks.

Just before schools were out last spring he was asked how he planned to spend his vacation.

"Guess I'll go out to Wheaton, Illinois, and see 'Red' Grange. Sure, last time I seen 'Red' he says to me, ' "Mail Pouch," ' says he, "come out to Wheaton and see me dis summer. I'll be drivin' an ice wagon and me old man's de constable. Between his jail and me ice wagon we'll keep you cool and show you a good time. Sure, 'Mail Pouch,' come out to Wheaton and rest up fer de summer.'

"Mail Pouch" began yarning about other big athletes he knows. Kipke and Roby of Michigan, Johnny Stewart, Ohio State star, now with the Saint Louis Browns, Big Jim Welch of Colgate and "Chick" Meehan of Syracuse, are some of his friends.

As he talks, he works with a file and knife. A carpenter's drill bores the holes and in a few minutes he has "knocked out" a stone that brings words of admiration for its beauty.

"Here y' are, buddy, Colorado oil shale, dollar and a half wit' anyting on it yu want. Too much money? Well, dis year on account of de heavy thaws in Siberia, I'll make it a dollar to you. Sold. Who's next?"

CARL M. BAUMHART.

Little Gentleman

[*Continued from page 118*]

"Not at—ugh!—all," he replied, in the same odd tone. "I—ah—I believe—*ugh!*"

He dropped his hands from his hat, and rose. His manner was slightly agitated. "I fear I may have taken a trifling—ah—cold. I should —ah—perhaps be—ah—better at home. I will—ah—say good night."

At the steps, he instinctively lifted his hand to remove his hat, but did not do so, and, saying "Good night," again in a frigid voice, departed with visible stiffness from that house, to return no more.

"Well, of all—" cried Mrs. Schofield, astounded. "What was the matter? He just went—like that!" She made a flurried gesture. "In heaven's name, Margaret, what *did* you say to him?"

"I!" exclaimed Margaret, indignantly. "Nothing! He just went!"

"Why, he didn't even take off his hat when he said good night!" said Mrs. Schofield.

Margaret, who had crossed the doorway, caught the ghost of a whisper behind her, where stood Penrod.

"You bet he didn't!"

He knew not that he was overheard.

A frightful suspicion flashed through Margaret's mind—a suspicion that Mr. Kinosling's hat would have to be either boiled off or shaved off. With growing horror she recalled Penrod's long absence when he went to bring the hat.

"Penrod," she cried, "let me see your hands!"

She had toiled at those hands herself late that afternoon, nearly scalding her own, but at last achieving a lily purity.

"Let me see your hands!"

She seized them. Again they were tarred!

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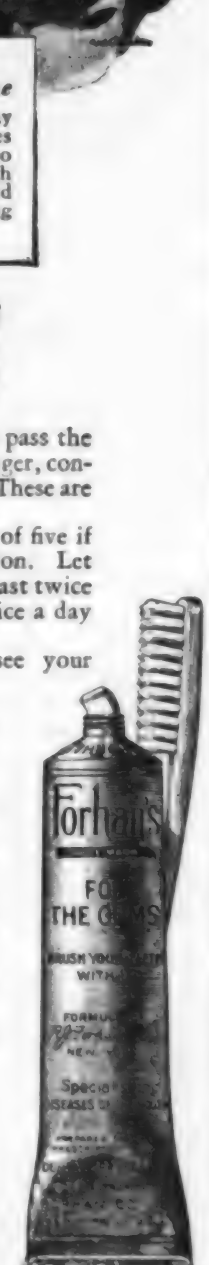

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Harvey Garrard's Crime

[*Continued from page 101*]

"You'd get something, no doubt," he repeated. "You have already about three thousand a year, haven't you? And you would get your freedom."

"And then what would happen to me?" she asked softly. "I couldn't make much of life with three thousand a year."

Fardale was silent. His infatuation for this woman had surprised him—a professional gallivanter—by its intensity. He had commenced by being flattered by her notice, had been content in the height of the season with an odd word or two, a place now and then at her smaller parties, an occasional introduction to the least important of her friends. His personal admiration for her had probably developed to an almost unreasonable extent from the very fact of her differing so greatly from any of the other women of his world. Her coldness fascinated him; her apparent lack of passion only stimulated his desire. She presented an entire contrast to the wives and daughters of his city friends and the young women of the theatrical world who formed the major part of his female acquaintances. Still, the question she has asked him now was a leading one. He had never contemplated marriage, and although the very idea of marriage with a personage so far above him socially had its fascination, he was a cautious man and he hesitated. He reflected, however, that they were alone and speech was safe enough.

"You might marry me," he suggested.

She smiled graciously. He realized that he had at least made the correct answer.

"I'm afraid I'm rather an extravagant woman," she sighed. "Tell me, are you very rich?"

"My income last year," he confided, "was about forty thousand. That's after I'd paid my income tax."

She half closed her eyes in silent ecstasy. For a moment he was a hero, glorified into a desirable thing by the virtue of his possessions.

"Shall I tell Harvey that I would like my freedom?" she asked softly.

"Why not?" he demanded. "That seems to be what he wants."

She was thoughtful for a moment.

"I wish I knew more about that girl."

"I don't see that she matters," he remarked.

"Harvey's been so queer always," she went on meditatively. "There were lots of women, even among my friends, who would have been glad enough to flirt with him, but he never seemed to care about anything of the sort. This very woman with whom we are dining tonight—the Princess Lutinoff—did everything she could to attract him, and failed. I should like to know what there is about that young woman."

"Perhaps she is a myth, too," Fardale suggested. "He may have really needed a secretary."

"On an Atlantic liner? Harvey? Absurd! Hush, please! Here come the Lutinoffs. Remember not to call me by my Christian name."

The Lutinoffs were true to type; he, dark, aristocratic and dissipated; she, personable enough still with the skilful use of cosmetics, a trifle overdressed and overbejeweled, a constant and surprising talker. She aimed at effects and secured them. Being the daughter of a millionaire, Fardale was without interest to her, and his share in the dinner table conversation was almost negligible. It was not until the meal was well on its way, in fact, that he discovered that he was host.

"It was sweet of you, Mr. Fardale, to ask us to join you for dinner," the Princess said, taking sudden notice of him. "You're a lucky man to have been entertaining Mildred. I can never get hold of her. I don't know how you manage it, Mildred. Everybody asks you everywhere and yet you never seem to trouble to make yourself particularly agreeable. Where's your Beau Brummel husband? He's the only man Paul here, my husband, has ever been jealous of. No cause, worse luck! I did my best, too. I don't think he likes American women."

"Harvey's just back from America," Mildred replied. "He's in London now, trying to make some money."

"Ridiculous!" the Princess scoffed. "What does he know about money-making? More in your line I should think, isn't it, Mr. Fardale?"

"I am a banker," he acknowledged. "There have been times when I have been fortunate."

"Money's the shibboleth down here," the Princess continued. "Thank God, I have enough of it to buy what I want without having to intrigue for it. I bought you, didn't I, Paul, dear?"

"You buy the best of everything," he replied, a little insolently.

"I am not sure that you are one of my best bargains," she rejoined. "I think if I had waited longer I might have done better."

"My dear," her husband remarked, with an ironical bow, "another choice for you would have been impossible. I should have married you if you had not possessed a dollar."

"Paul is a superb liar," his wife confided. "By-the-by, what are your people going to do afterward?"

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"We thought of spending a quiet—" Fardale began.

"What do you think would be amusing?" Mildred intervened, "the Casino here and Maxim's afterward, or the Casino at Monte Carlo and Café de Paris afterward? The Carlton, alas, is closed."

"We have no car until tomorrow, or I should prefer Monte Carlo," the Princess admitted.

"Mr. Fardale has a Rolls-Royce here," Mildred announced. "You'll take us all, won't you, Mr. Fardale?"

"I'm afraid I gave the man an evening off," was the half-sulky, half-regretful reply.

"Nonsense! You can ring up the garage and tell him you want him," Mildred insisted. "Maître d'Hôtel, please send for the telephone boy," she continued, turning to the waiter by her side. "If he's gone out, we must hire. I am like you, Adele, I much prefer Monte Carlo."

"Then we are of one mind," the Prince declared. "I cannot play *chemin de fer* at Nice. The crowd unnerves me. What is your favorite form of gambling, Mr. Fardale?"

The two men engaged in a more or less animated discussion, while the Princess and Mildred exchanged gossip about mutual friends. The Prince, whose credit his wife had temporarily restricted, remembered that Mr. Fardale was a banker and became more and more affable. The latter, listening to him with respect as he laid down the law about games of chance, became more reconciled to the situation. There was plenty of time ahead. Mildred was naturally anxious to introduce him to her friends and several people whom he knew by sight had noticed him dining with them. He abandoned his somewhat sulky attitude and expanded into joviality. The arrival of the bill brought with it some return of his cynicism, but after all there was a certain satisfaction in playing host with Mildred as hostess. He discharged the account royally, did the honors of his really fine car with the proper amount of modesty, and, winning a spectacular coup at roulette with his first stake, invited every one to supper. It was not until his car stopped at the Ruhl in the early hours of the morning that he felt any return of his ill-temper. He had lost twenty milles, Mildred had borrowed five which he knew that he had not the slightest chance of recovering, he had paid for a most extravagant supper, and in view of the fact that the Prince was a much better performer, he had scarcely been allowed to dance with Mildred at all.

"Mr. Fardale gets down here," Mildred explained, smiling at him sweetly. "Thanks for a most delightful evening, Mr. Fardale. Do look us up tomorrow if you have nothing better to do."

He was a little taken aback.

"What about lunch?" he asked.

"I am lunching alone with Adele," Mildred explained. "We have so much to talk about. Come in about tea-time."

Mr. Fardale's adieux were barely gracious. The Princess leaned back with a yawn as the car started off again.

"What a quaint person!" she exclaimed.

"An excellent host," Mildred drawled.

The Prince snorted.

"He should stay where he belongs," he declared. "I offered him the privilege of lending me five milles and he declared that he had run out of money himself. I saw at least thirty milles in his pocket-book."

"Abominable!" Mildred sympathized.

"He must have heard about you," the Princess surmised.

FARDALE came face to face with Harvey Garrard in Lombard Street one afternoon soon after his return from the Riviera. Fardale was bronzed from the Southern suns and reeked of prosperity; Harvey was pale and tired, with lines under his deep-set eyes and the listlessness of pain-weariness in his languid movements. He passed Fardale without apparently recognizing him. The latter had only progressed a few yards, however, when he felt a hand upon his shoulder.

"I want to speak to you," Harvey announced.

"What about?"

The crowd was great. Harvey glanced around and pointed to a tea-shop down two or three steps.

"Come in here with me," he invited. "I shall not keep you long."

Fardale chafed but obeyed—the subject of a stronger will. He was also curious to know what Mildred's husband had to say to him. They seated themselves before a marble-topped table.

"Have you been down on the Riviera with my wife?" Harvey inquired.

"I have been down on the Riviera," was the truculent reply, "but certainly not with your wife. I wasn't even staying at the same hotel."

"I find it easy to believe you," Harvey remarked. "I know my wife."

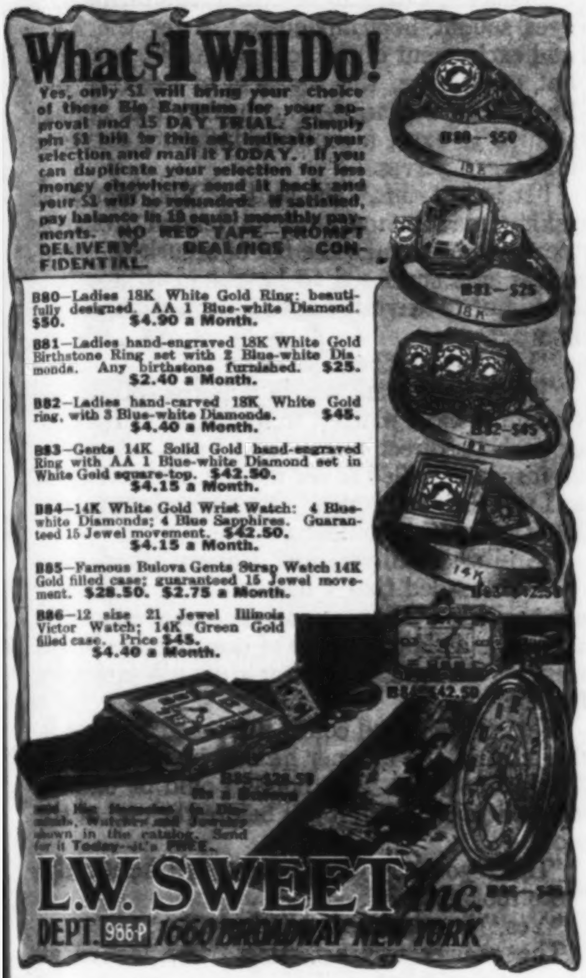
"Well, what else?"

"Not much. Perhaps I was wrong to accost you. It never entered into my head that I should ever speak to you again. I thought that you might have something to say to me. I don't like you, you know, Fardale. I resent you exceedingly."

The man's anger was rising.

"What the devil do you mean by that?" he demanded.

"Just what I say—nothing more, nothing less," was the equable rejoinder. "You ought to stay where you belong. People with money don't nowadays. It's a nuisance, all the same. I have just had a letter from my wife. Did you dictate it?"



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"I read it," Fardale acknowledged insolently. "What are you going to do?"

"Under certain conditions I shall afford my wife the opportunity she desires of divorcing me," Harvey replied. "What I cannot understand is her reason for wanting anything of the sort. She can't really intend to marry you."

"Why not?"

HARVEY shrugged his shoulders ever so slightly. His long fingers searched for a moment in his case. He drew out a cigaret and lit it.

"I wouldn't ask that question if I were you, Fardale," he said. "You know—you know quite well. My wife has her faults, but she is critical. I don't believe she could live with a person of your class."

"Did you bring me in here to insult me?" Fardale demanded furiously.

"I don't really know why I brought you in," Harvey confessed, "except that I didn't wish to be seen talking to you in the street. However, since you are here, listen to a little plain speech. I hate all the machinery of divorce, I hate the vulgarity of it and, to a certain extent, the deceit. Nevertheless, I'll go through it as Mildred suggests, but I hope to God she has no thought of marrying you."

"If you're divorced, what business is it of yours whom she marries?" Fardale demanded.

"Women are such shocking bad judges of men," Harvey observed. "I couldn't possibly let my wife make such a hideous mistake without ample warning. You're such a common fellow, Fardale—such an unmitigated bounder."

The man rose to his feet.

"Damn you!" he exclaimed. "Are you trying to insult me?"

Harvey shook his head.

"An impossible task," he murmured. "I just wanted you to understand. You can run along now, if you like. I've finished with you. Pay for your coffee as you go out, please. I'm hanged if I'll spend threepence on you."

Fardale departed, fuming, and Harvey followed him a few minutes later with a twinkle of amusement in his eyes. The encounter had in a sense stimulated him. He took a taxi and drove back to Bermondsey with that little smile still at the corners of his lips. His progress through the warehouses was slow and often impeded. He had a dozen questions to answer, a crowd of buyers from different parts of England eager for a word with him. Greatorex had a handful of cables and Newes, his traveler from the Midlands, was awaiting with a large contract for his signature. Finally he made his way to his private room, where he found Grace.

"Can I speak to you for a moment," she begged, "before any one comes in?"

"Of course," he answered, a sudden apprehension gripping his heart.

She leaned back in her chair, hesitating. His eyes sought hers anxiously. After the hurry and excitement of the rooms outside, her pleasant composure, the neatness of her cool blue linen dress, the faultless arrangement of her hair seemed to exert a soothing influence over even his jagged nerves.

"It is just this," she said. "You remember asking me the morning we landed from the steamer not to take the list of securities grandfather was supposed to have had to Scotland Yard but to leave the matter for a time in your hands."

"Yes, I remember," he admitted.

"Well," she went on, "I suppose Mr. Brandon must have written to some one in London, or perhaps direct to Scotland Yard. Anyhow, an inspector called to see me this afternoon just as I was finishing lunch. He wanted me to give him the list of the missing bonds."

"And what did you do?" Harvey asked.

"I pretended that I had left it in America," she replied. "He seemed very annoyed and he asked me a ridiculous lot of questions. It was the only thing I could think of. Was I very foolish?"

The moment had come, unexpectedly, not in the least in the manner he had imagined. He thought rapidly. The bonds would be back in his possession without fail before the end of the month.

"Have you any idea," she asked hesitantly, "who took them?"

"Yes," he answered. "I have."

The answer was arresting. She looked at him in amazement.

"Harvey!" she exclaimed. "I beg your pardon—Mr. Garrard. Tell me about it at once, please."

He turned in his chair toward her. His hands were tightly clenched.

"Grace," he announced, "that surmise of yours was the truth. It was some one in the place."

"Has he confessed?" she demanded. "Where are the bonds?"

"Every one of the bonds will be returned," he said. "You will have the whole of your money—and it is a great deal more than you expected—within a month. I will be responsible for that, Grace. I guarantee it."

"How wonderful!" she cried, her eyes alight with joy. "I can scarcely believe it. Some one in the place here! What was the good of them if he hasn't sold any?"

"I am going to ask a great deal of you, Grace," he declared. "Some day I will tell you the name of the thief. Just now, until the matter is cleared up, I would rather not. I want to keep the police out of it, if I can. So long as they haven't the particulars of the bonds they can't very well interfere. What do you say?"

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